



## THE OUTLOOK FOR HOMO SAPIENS

with me that I was seeing the world then in a very distorted and foggy fashion. And yet—I was seeing it as most people in Great Britain were seeing it at that time. I was seeing it as vast multitudes of people are seeing it to-day. I was seeing it as it was shown to me. For a score of years before that time tremendous discoveries had been made about the past of the earth and about the origins of man. They were immensely important discoveries, they were a challenge to every idea about life commonly accepted at that time. Yet these fundamental discoveries had not been imparted to my parents, who were both intelligent, book-reading persons. My lay and religious teachers, poor men, bound in honour, you would have thought, to teach me the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, gave me their stale old histories without a hint of the broadening knowledge of the time. I still wonder why they deceived me so. Mainly I think because they were too overworked and underpaid to keep up with the times. They couldn't tell me because they themselves had not been told about these revelations. They were the ignorant, self-satisfied transmitters of a dead tradition.

Most of the books that came into my hands were books ten or twenty years old, for in those days, just as now, no one, no education minister for example, was pretending to dream of giving people contemporary knowledge. Even to-day, except for a few rare adventurous publishers, nobody in any country in the world is really bothering to secure mankind abundant, cheap new books. Cheap new books happen or don't happen according to the state of the market. Knowledge oozes about, with cheap printing and paper, and dries up when they dry up. Our English-speaking democracies, about which we boast so inordinately, are still grossly ignorant and misinformed. But I think the books we got in 1880 were more second-hand and out-of-date and shabbier than the stuff people get to-day. So by 1880 I saw my world pretty wrong—by the higher standards of that time.

I forget when it was I began to realise that the world as it had been presented to me was not a trustworthy picture of reality, that in effect I was being lied to about life. I began doubting quite early in life. The religion they put before me was queer, muddled stuff, metaphors about unfatherly fathers and sacrificial sons, blood offerings and blood-dripping sacrifice.

H. G. WELLS

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# THE OUTLOOK FOR HOMO SAPIENS.

An amalgamation and modernization of  
two books : *The Fate of Homo Sapiens* and  
*The New World Order*.

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and rephrased in far more effective modes. In the foreground and middle distance also, concerning affairs upon this planet and the more obvious and immediate activities of life, our enlightenment has been immense. Thanks largely to Freud and his disciples and successors, there has been an immense advance in our self-knowledge. I would put Freud side by side with Darwin as a significant figure in human enlightenment. These two men are cardinal not so much on account of the actual elucidations they produced but because of the questions they asked and the method of their questioning. Our knowledge first of our own motives and impulses and then of mass-thought and mass-action, has become beyond comparison more lucid and practical, thanks primarily to the initiatives of Freud.

One immediate result of this rapid progressive enlargement and confirmation of our former outlook, has been a tremendous wave of optimistic assurance in the minds of liberal-minded, freely thinking people. They have taken progress in discovery, in intelligent social organisation, in the conquest of want, disease, ignorance, as something almost as inevitable as the precession of the Equinoxes. That progress has had the air of something quite independent of the daily lives and mass responses of everyday people. There was nothing anyone need do about it. It came; it unfolded; it increased. Progress! The men of science, inventors, clever people somewhere were doing it all for us and all we had to do was to sit back and marvel and accept cornucopia. There are the facts before us, the novelties, the triumphs, perpetually reinforced. In the world as I see it to-day, the powers and possibilities of human effort appear enormously greater than they did in 1888. And still they increase. Still the prospect and the promise expand.

The case for optimism about physical wants is stronger now than ever. So far as economic circumstances go, the world could be organised to provide every living soul upon it with abundant food, housing and leisure, and that without either direct compulsion to toil or any irksome monotony of employment. We have passed in a single lifetime from a general neediness to a practicable plenty for all. The story is too familiar to need exhaustive recapitulation here. Aviation and radio communication have abolished distance. In 1888 the unity of the world as one community was a remote aspiration; *now* it



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really curved and that the faster and farther they sailed the more effectively they would realise how the round earth was falling away from their first assumptions. All their old landmarks would then vanish one after another. Astounded navigators found unfamiliar constellations in the heavens. Within two dozen centuries man has been discovering that he lives not on a flat earth but upon a globe, and within the last ten, that he is not the centre of the universe but a denizen of a very second-rate planet. He has had to readjust his general ideas about life to that, and to a certain extent he has adjusted them. To a certain extent only.

And similarly our historical imaginations, quite as much as our geographical imaginations, live to-day in a vastly enlarged system of perspectives. We know that the everlasting hills are not everlasting, that all our working conceptions of behaviour and destiny are provisional and that human nature and everything about it is being carried along upon an irreversible process of change. Our historical ideas reach back now through vistas of millions of years, we see humanity emerging from sub-human conditions, from the life of relatively solitary apes, at distances in the nature of a quarter of a million years, we know with increasing precision of the onset of a social hunting life in those distant ages, we are able to trace the beginnings of agriculture in a period of two or three hundred centuries, and by the new scale, the development of cities, language, law, religious organisation and all the various adaptations of humanity to the new conditions of a regular food supply, all that social system which seemed as eternal as the heavens, appear now events of yesterday, devoid of any finality whatsoever. That fixity of the normal human life which our great-great-grandfathers assumed as a matter of plain common sense, we discover was a transient dream. As our perspectives open, it vanishes.

The rapid progress of social psychology, human ecology and all the ill-defined activities of human and general biology, is opening our eyes, it is opening even the eyes of our trained historians and our social teachers, to the real nature of our everyday social life. It is brought home to us that the human species for the last twenty or twenty-five thousand years has been living in such a continuously accelerating process of change as no other animal species has ever been called upon

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power of learning from experience and of supplementing direct impulse by conditioned reflexes increases. A young fish or reptile comes into the world with a practically complete, almost unalterable set of instinctive responses. It survives or fails by its inherited outfit. Apparently it can learn to a certain extent, but it learns very little. A young mammal comes into life far less conclusively equipped, a *tabula rasa*, prepared to learn. It learns. And the ampler its cerebral equipment, the more it learns to take care of itself. To begin with, it is sillier and less certain than the cold-blooded type; it stands in need of protection; in the end it is far better adapted to meet the special conditions it faces.

Moreover, the young mammal and, to a rather different extent and in a rather different fashion, the young bird do not simply learn from individual experience. Generally speaking there is also a protective relationship between the parent and the new individual. By example and often by direct intervention the young individual is taught. It heeds and imitates.

As we ascend the scale of cerebral development the possibility of teaching increases. It becomes possible to domesticate and train these higher-brain animals in just the measure that their brains are developed. You can teach very little to a fish or a reptile, but directly you come to the higher cerebral mammals you are confronted by the new possibility of establishing an artificial, taught, motive system to control, supplement or altogether replace natural instinct. You must catch them young. Then you can socialise them and get to quite remarkable working understandings with them. The shepherd's dog, the blind man's dog, the polo pony, the polite house-trained cat, are examples of the immense individual adaptability which is achieved through the establishment of a taught, secondary self in the cerebral cortex. None of these creatures are behaving in accordance with the primary tendencies they have inherited. They are behaving in accordance with an adaptive mental superstructure imposed upon their natural dispositions. It enables them to survive not simply as tolerated but as contributing individuals in a complex social organisation which otherwise would have had no alternative but their extermination. They would have suffered the fate that is overtaking the unteachable Tasmanian Devil or the unteachable Tasmanian Wolf.

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marauding and the youngest kept the home. You can re-write the history of all the great population movements in terms of the pressure of the young male surplus.

It should be particularly evident as an operating cause in the history of the last two centuries, and it would be if history were properly told. Every community can be shown to be either sending out the plethora of its population as emigrants and settlers or reducing it by warfare, or else suffering from acute social trouble, such social trouble as the words Russian Hooligans, Chinese Boxers, Moonlighters, Nazis, Fascists, revolutionary terrorists, gangsters, will call to mind. The young man surplus, if it is not consumed, is the main source of rebels, revolutionaries and disturbances of all kinds. Somehow that tension must find relief. The comparative social stability of the nineteenth century was largely due to emigration and the settlement of new lands. Now there are no more new lands open to immigration.

Moreover this tension has been greatly intensified by the huge increase of productive efficiency through invention and the use of mechanical power, which has diminished the number of young men who could look forward to a fairly secure, properly rewarded, sufficiently interesting married life.

Invention and discovery in production have intensified this age-long human problem and contributed to the present exceptional drift towards warfare and social convulsions. People stand in the young man's way and he is ready to get rid of them in any fashion suggested to him. That drift towards a social killing-off, and the necessity of justifying it, explain the eagerness with which race difference, class difference, any sort of difference of complexion, language or usage, nationalism and imperialism, are exalted into combatant provocations to-day. You can waste a lot of time arguing about this or that *ism*. The essential fact is the accumulating tension of unsatisfied youth, and these *isms* are mere formulae of relief.<sup>1</sup>

Warfare and social conflict have for long ages released the plethoric human species towards the relief of a blood-letting. So it has been through all the ages of recorded history. With the relatively puny means of destruction available before the age of invention and innovation, it was no more than an excretion of inconvenient energy. For some hundreds of centuries

<sup>1</sup> See Note 5A. A falling birth-rate does not affect this.

## INTRODUCTION

I WAS ASKED IN 1939 to set down as simply and clearly as I could, in one compact book, the reality of the human situation, that is to say I was asked to state the world as I see it and what is happening to it. I did this in a book, *The Fate of Homo Sapiens*, which is here substantially reproduced. But this led to a further demand for a practical political programme arising out of this work. That was published under the title of *The New World Order*. My publishers have now suggested the amalgamation of the two under the title of *The Outlook for Homo Sapiens*. I found it an attractive proposal, and here is the outcome.

A very large part of my conscious life has been a struggle for effective knowledge. I have attempted to collect and summarise existing knowledge so that it could be made available in human living, and to induce other and abler people to take up the same work. I have worked also to bring together incompatible systems of thinking about reality, systems which ignore each other stupidly and wastefully, and are manifestly answerable for much fundamental confusion in human thought. These unresolved, contradictory philosophies and theologies encumber the human mind, and their irresolution is largely due to an elaborate mutual disregard. I am exceptionally intolerant of such inconsistencies, because if I attempt to deal with them they worry and entangle me. I cannot make the necessary reservations and adjustments.

The peculiar strength and the peculiar weakness of my mind are one and the same quality. Put favourably, mine is a very direct mind; put unfavourably, it is unsubtle. I am impatient of complicating details and conventional misstatements because I am afraid of them. The reader will find this book ego-centred, for so we all began, and also insistent. I hammer at my main ideas, and this is an offence to delicate-minded people. If a door is not open I say it is shut, and I am

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generation be "getting on". It must be doing things, making or re-making with an effect of conquest and general participation. The earlier years were preparation; the later, relieved of the high fever and impatience of that full onset of vitality, are appreciation, deliberation and the continual broadening-out of the human agenda.

These three propositions, peace, collectivism and incessant new enterprise, are interdependent and practically inseparable. One cannot be realised without the other two. In stating these propositions we are not in any way "laying down the law". The law is in the nature of things. We are merely stating as precisely as possible the unconditional terms that our race manifestly has to expect.

To what extent is contemporary thought and education moving towards the abolition of war?

An increasing number of us are realising that the age of independent sovereign states and empires throughout the world, free to make war and prepared to make war, each separated from the other by barriers of language, religion, historical delusions and those differences in habits of life which are called national cultures, is coming to an end, obviously, rapidly; and at present not one of us can say with any confidence what sort of world order can replace it. A world order we feel there must be, but as to how it is to be attained, we are all at sixes and sevens.

The world of man has to become, has—in a chaotic disorder of conflict—already become, one community—one disorderly community. In the days of Oliver Goldsmith what happened in China, happened in China, and did not matter a rap to anyone in England. If every time one fired a gun in England, he remarked, a man died in China, nobody would mind in the least. The shooting would go on. Now what happens in China happens everywhere in the world; that is to say it is known and affects life everywhere. The crude fact of the world-wide community is here now. The open questions arise when we consider *how* this inevitable coming together of our communities can and will be recognised and established as a world order.

We have indeed already seen one attempt to reconstitute man affairs so as to eliminate this destructive process of modern war, in the League of Nations experiment. That we



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impatient with the suggestion of worldly wisdom that it may be possible to wangle a way round. Yet there may be a way round if you do not lose yourself getting there. You have been warned that I shall not be with you in any such uncertain enterprise. I work not simply for knowledge but for a stark clarity of thought about it. It seems to me a fair challenge to demand a lucid statement of the vision of the universe to which this directness of enquiry and assemblage have brought me.

That vision may affect many readers as unflattering to human self-esteem. I cannot help that; it is the way in which reality has unfolded itself before me.

By way of Introduction I will tell how I came to see the world as I do. Then in the subsequent sections I will give the conclusions at which I have arrived to-day. I will tell what I first saw of life. How I saw it. How I was allowed to see it. How my range of vision extended. How knowledge, experience and imagination accumulated and horizon opened beyond horizon.

I was born in a rather unprosperous home, there was no nursery and most of my waking day was spent in an underground kitchen. Very little remains in my memory now of that first world, my infantile world. As I saw it then, it seemed to be the only world. When I put together the notes for this Introduction, I sat for a time, doing my utmost to recall what picture of the world I had in early childhood. I got scarcely anything at all.

It must have been a very limited picture. I had few general ideas. Or none. For instance, my mind was not living in a flat world or a round world or anything of that sort. I was not bothering about any shape or size of the world. I was entirely incurious about all that. I was just living in "the world". I was informed that there was a home for little children above the bright blue sky, but I do not remember that that interested me in the slightest degree. I was rather more concerned about Old Bogey who would come and fetch me if I told fibs and so on, and I rather disliked (but I did not think very much about) a certain divine eye that was always watching me—generally with disapproval. But as far as my recollections go, I was much more afraid of bears, tigers, black men, Red Indians and other dangers, lurking in the

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proposes but a permanent federation on the American model, with a common foreign policy, common money, common armed forces, common control of interstate and foreign trade and a common citizenship. He sweeps aside such questions as the status of India, colonial possessions, the various monarchist traditions involved, as secondary questions. Soviet Russia he balances on the brim of his project with a query—on the whole an encouraging query. Apparently the federated democracies are to have great local economic autonomy within the limits of the federal constitution.

Before we look into Mr. Streit's proposals more closely, it will be worth while to get this loose word "democracy" defined. The special interest of his book here lies in the fact that it has been well received by a considerable number of considerable people. It is an intimation of how rapidly opinion is moving towards the conception of a new world order transcending existing boundaries. So far it is a book to be welcomed. But it is also an indication of the extreme vagueness so prevalent about the necessary material and mental conditions of such a world order. Its pseudo-practical short-sightedness is almost as manifest as the boldness of its intention.

I do not believe that a world order can come into existence without a preliminary mental cosmopolis. I may be mistaken in that. Political federation, loose and confused at first, may precede and impose the necessary mental adaptations. That is too roundabout and slow a process for the limitations of my imagination. World democracy, I believe, would get lost on the way.

### § 6

## WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

SINCE WE NOW FIND ourselves fighting, enduring and dying for "democracy", it seems worth while to ask for some clear definition of what democracy means, so that we can not only fight for it, but be prepared to see that in the end we get it. When you question people closely in the matter, you will encounter a considerable variety of answers, but you will find

## INTRODUCTION

shadows upstairs and round the corner. That infantile world was a world of vivid, immediate, inconsecutive realities against a background of nothingness that evoked no curiosity. There was the house next door, there was the moon, there was night, there was day and so forth. Why not? With the utmost effort, that is all I can reconstruct of the world I saw before I began to read books and see pictures, go for walks, go to school, and inspect and enquire with the freedom of seven or eight years old.

I have a fuller conception of what I was seeing after that stage. My imagination was being used to amplify and extend what I saw and heard and felt directly. A rather foggy time-background was taking shape. I heard about "Once upon a time." Before I existed. I had a jumbled idea of old England, mostly forests with turrets peeping out of them, old Paris, Rome, where it was always Nero and Christians fighting beasts in the Coliseum. My historical ideas centred upon Windsor Castle. I had seen Windsor Castle, and I firmly believed that that grandiose round tower, which George the Fourth clapped upon it, was built by William the Conqueror. Rome, Greece, Babylon, Jerusalem and Egypt, arranged anyhow, crowded the background, and the Creation, seen across the shining waters of the Flood and a curious procession of very, very, very old gentlemen—Methuselah beat the record—sealed up the vista of the past.

I was interested in geography chiefly because it provided varied scenery for imaginary adventures. I thought China and Japan were made to be laughed at, though their porcelain and silks and fans were clever. I knew that there were also savages for whom Britain provided missionaries and machine-guns. Savages were generally cannibals and wore few or no garments, which seemed to me very rude of them indeed. I knew the world was round because everybody told me so. If they had told me the world was cone-shaped or flat, I should have known that with equal conviction—and it was only years afterwards that I realised how difficult it is to prove that the world is a globe. There were upper classes one respected and lower classes that one didn't, and poor people had to work, and that was how things were. The nearer I could edge up to the upper classes the better it would be for me.

So I saw the world about the year 1880, when I was rising fourteen years old, and I think most of my readers will agree

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Now the desire for conscious, free, individual action is innate in the normal human being. But it can be inhibited by fear of known or unknown consequences, by indolence and following the drift, and by a complex of infantile dispositions to imitate and obey. The herd instinct is very strong in the immature human animal. It will follow a leader or stampede like a cow, and find great relief from perplexity in doing so. The preference of democracy for the practical maximum of conscious, free, individual action requires a justification beyond the mere faltering desire in our hearts to "stand up, look heaven in the face and be a man".

For the normal man, unrestrained democracy is a very exacting way of living indeed. It asks too much of his natural resources. In a thousand situations even a wise or able man may find himself unable to decide upon the line of action that is fairly the best for himself and also the best for the general good, and in ten thousand he will find a fatal delay in his decisions. For that reason, a detailed, comprehensive, agreed-upon, accessible and understandable system of laws, which are really rules for behaviour in predigested situations, is a necessary preliminary condition for a modern democracy. A taxi-cab tariff or the rule of the road or a minimum wage is a convenient elementary instance of the way in which conscious, free, individual action is set aside to the general benefit in a modern democratic community. We extend that principle nowadays to rates of interest and inordinate profits, to the acquisition of land and many forms of property and to an increasing number of ordinary transactions. Our modern democratic community would frustrate its own declared aims without a complete, detailed, legal framework enforced by a judiciary and a police acting strictly under the law. The man who in a breath will say "I am a democrat" and also "I am a rebel" is simply a fool.

The contrast between democracy and the forms of community with which it is generally contrasted lies essentially in this reliance upon law. In a democracy a man does or should know, or should be easily able to ascertain, exactly "where he stands", what he must do, what he may do, what cannot be done, and he should be able to say with the utmost confidence "You be damned" to any illegal order or request. The laws must restrain and protect him have received his implicit or

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Modern democracy is not only legalism and equalitarianism ; it is socialism. It sets its face against all abuse of the advantages of ownership.

Democracy is socialism, and also, by a natural extension of its equalitarianism as the problem of world law becomes urgent, it is cosmopolitan. Almost tacitly democracy has accepted and assimilated the necessity that law must be world law and equally protective of every individual human being.

So far as cosmopolitanism goes, modern democracy reverts to far older revolts of human commonsense against racial, national and class distinctions. Since the rise of Buddhism there has been hardly any broad religious initiative that has not at least paid lip service to this idea which, in Christianity for example, is incorporated in the formula of an impartial divine fatherhood and an equal brotherhood of man. In *The Outline of History* the association of cosmopolitanism with theocrasia and the appearance of the syncretic universal religions is traced. There was a double impulse from below and from above ; the desire of the expanding empires to fuse local particularisms into a larger order under the God Emperor was in accordance with the craving of normal commonsense to escape from the irksomeness of obviously artificial estrangements. Dr. T. J. Haarhoff, quoting W. W. Tarn's *Alexander and the Unity of Mankind*, declares that Alexander "was the pioneer of one of the supreme revolutions in the world outlook, the first man known to us who contemplated the brotherhood of man or the unity of mankind". This is an exaggeration of a significant fact. Cosmopolitanism, universal brotherhood, has indeed been appearing and reappearing in human thought for at least the past four and twenty centuries, like sunshine trying to break through a cloudy sky.

Now the "democracy" that found its expression in the first French Revolution, the American Revolution and the liberal movement throughout the world, was not only incomplete upon the economic side and had, later and with difficulty, to become socialist in order to preserve its liberating intention, but also it was very sketchy and indefinite in the matter of education.

This was due to the fact that the ideology of the Great Revolution was essentially middle-class in its origins. It sprang from a social stratum already educated and so satisfied with the sufficiency of its general education and so accustomed to a supply of books and pamphlets that it did not realise that there

## INTRODUCTION

lambs (in suburban London!), an irrational fall and a vindictive judgment, stuff that took refuge from any intelligent questions behind a screen of awe, mystery and menace, so that my reason did not so much reject it as fail altogether to accept it. What they called morality seemed planned to thrust me into some nasty secret corners and leave me there. I had some bad times, fearing a God whom I felt but did not care to think was a spy, a bully, a tyrant and fundamentally insane, and it was only after terrific distresses and terrors that I achieved disbelief. Fear lingered in my mind long after definite faith had dissolved.

The sublunary world they imposed upon me was equally difficult to accept. The history they taught me wound up at 1700, which was queer when one came to think about it. But even then I must have read books about the French Revolution and George Washington and the Roman Republic, and they had upset my simple faith in the inevitability of our political order, the Dear Queen and all the rest of it. A sixpenny book by the late Henry George came into my hands and set me thinking crudely, destructively but profitably about rent, wages and suchlike matters. Some rumours about a science called geology reached me. I had already observed for myself in the pictures in Wood's *Natural History* that different species of animals had quite needless resemblances to one another, if it was indeed true that they had all been made separately. Then about that time my schoolmaster set me reading science text-books to earn Education Department grants for him, and suddenly I woke up to the existence of a vast and growing world of thought and knowledge outside my ordinary circle of ideas altogether. My heavens opened, and the world as I had seen it hitherto became a flimsy veil upon the face of reality.

I have heard other people who have had similar experiences to mine tell of the *thirst for knowledge* they experienced. I suppose I had that thirst in good measure, but far stronger was my anger at the paltry sham of an education that had been fobbed off upon me; angry resentment also at the dismal negligence of the social and religious organisations responsible for me, that had allowed me to be thrust into the hopeless drudgery of a shop, ignorant, misinformed, under-nourished and physically under-developed, without warning and without guidance, at the age of thirteen. To sink or swim. I was too young to make allowances for the people who were exploiting and stifling me.

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### § 7

#### WHERE IS DEMOCRACY?

WHERE IN ALL THIS collection of governments Mr. Streit would have us federate is there one that satisfies this plain bare statement of the growing and deepening significance of the democratic idea?

France depends for its mental expression upon an alliance of reactionary papers and for its foreign policy upon an association of diplomatists and army chiefs which has held together throughout its dynastic and political fluctuations in one consistent policy for the security and advancement of *La France*. America tempers a wide tolerance of free speech and personal criticism with a press-sustained persecution of labour leaders, radicals, "reds" and "agitators" generally. Its press, if less centralised than the French, and so less concerted, is equally commercial. The freedom of expression of its university professors is pinched between the possibility of dismissal for excessive outspokenness from above and the attacks of the press-man from below. The American record of successfully framed-up cases against troublesome workers' leaders is a long and discreditable one, and one need only glance reproachfully at the distressful history of colour prejudice, unincorporated townships and the exploitation of penal labour in the more backward states. And yet these two are the "democracies" *par excellence*.

Most of the European states invited to Mr. Streit's federation are not even democratic in profession. Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland and the British Empire are monarchies; the monarch professes to act only on the advice of his or her ministers, but as a matter of fact the court is a centre of social and administrative influence of an entirely undemocratic sort. A crown is the symbol of graded privilege. In the place of *Heil Hitler* or the Fascist salute, these royalist peoples, at the sound of their particular Royal Anthem, stand stiffly to attention with an air of ineffable reverence. It is a quite parallel act of worship, and as complete a repudiation of the personal responsibility of democracy.

The disintegrating British Empire is now, one has to

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I did not realise that they were quite charming people really, if a little too self-satisfied and indolent. I thought they had conspired to keep me down. It wasn't true that they had conspired to keep me down. But I was down and they didn't bother. They took my inferiority as part of the accepted order. They just trod on me. But I did not discriminate about their responsibility. I *hated* them as only the young can hate, and it gave me the energy to struggle, and I set about struggling, for knowledge. I was bitterly determined to see my world clearer and truer, before it was too late.

To this day I will confess I dislike the restriction and distortion of knowledge as I dislike nothing else on earth. In this modern world it is, I hold, second only to murder to starve and cripple the mind of a child. Emasculation of the mind is surely more horrible than any degrading bodily mutilation. In our modern world we recoil from the deliberate manufacture of human dwarfs, harem attendants and choristers but the world still swarms with mental cripples, who follow the laws of their own distortion and scarcely suspect they are distorted.

I have indicated the limits of my world outlook in 1880. By extraordinarily good luck I caught up to something like contemporary knowledge in the course of a few years. In seven years, before I was twenty-one, I contrived—never mind how—to secure four years of almost continuous study, and three of these were at the Royal College of Science, and one under the professorship of the great Huxley, Darwin's friend; and by 1887 the world as I saw it had become something altogether greater, deeper and finer than the confused picture I had of it in 1880. Mentally, we all travel at our fastest, I suppose, between fourteen and twenty-one. Many of my readers will know from their own experience what I mean when I say that for me these years remain in my memory as if all the time I was putting together an immense jig-saw puzzle in a mood of inspiration. These were the most exciting years in my life. I had been blind and I was learning to see. The world opened out before me. By '88 I saw the world, not precisely as I see it to-day, but much more as I see it to-day than as I saw it in 1880. There has been a lot of expansion and supplementing since, but nothing like a fundamental reconstruction.

Now how did we—because I was one of a generation of science students—how did we see the world in '88? Time had



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influence will increase. Moreover, there are plenty of American professors manifestly disposed to take the risk of outspokenness and say what they like. If at times they veil their meaning a little from the possible hostility of the unintelligent in a deliberate obscurity of technicality that sometimes borders on jargon, that does not prevent their speculating very boldly about economic, social and international processes much more boldly and freshly than their English equivalents.

Again the bitter jests of such a French periodical as *Le Canard Enchaîné* were saturated with the soundest democratic scorn and derision. The desire of a considerable section of enlightened Frenchmen to sustain and complete the mighty impetus of the Declaration of the Rights of Man is genuine and obstinate. They will not willingly suffer France to desist from her traditional task of world enlightenment. For some years, in the face of overwhelming financial and political difficulties, there was a gallant attempt to produce a modern encyclopædia which might repeat the preparatory role of original Encyclopædists for the vaster needs of today.<sup>1</sup> Neither Americans nor British, with their vastly greater resources, have attempted anything so comprehensive and illuminating. It would be possible to quote hundreds of instances, names, books, speeches, utterances and acts, to show that all round and about the world, in a great multitude of still all-too-dispersed intelligences, democracy lives and advances.

But these evidences of a considerable and growing will for a reasonably complete democracy do not alter the fact that the directive forces in control of this miscellany of states Mr. Streit and his disciples would have us federate are scarcely more democratic in structure and method than those running the frank anti-democratic states.

Indeed, to call the present world convulsion a war between the "allied democracies" of the world and "totalitarian states" is putting all too fine a name upon it. The reality is a war of established governments and governing systems, claiming to represent "democracy" but still unwilling and unprepared to set themselves to realise the modern democratic idea, against expansive desperado governments that have shown themselves contemptuous of democratic pretensions and dangerous to the general peace. As our governments still conceive it, it remains

<sup>1</sup> See Note 7A, the Italian *Encyclopædia*.

## INTRODUCTION

opened out for us, and the Creation, the Fall of Man and the Flood, those simple fundamentals of the Judæo-Christian mythology, had vanished. For ever. Instead I saw a limitless universe throughout which the stars and nebulae were scattering like dust, and I saw life ascending, as it seemed, from nothingness towards the stars.

In the eighties the prevailing ideas about space and time, matter and energy, were simpler than they are now. Space and time just went on for ever, we thought. We students used to talk about the fourth and other dimensions, but when I wrote a story for the students' magazine and identified time with the fourth dimension, I thought I was being very original and paradoxical indeed. We also had very definitely limited ideas about the amount of energy latent in the universe, and it seemed to us that our world would probably "freeze up" in a few million years. Still even that gave us a long time ahead, and we thought humanity might see and do tremendous things. We knew the broad outline of the history of life in time; we knew that our ancestors were apes, and it seemed possible that man would go on to a power and wisdom beyond all precedent.

But our ideas of that progress we anticipated were remarkably restricted. Our imaginations were relatively unstimulated. For example, our world, as we saw it then, knew nothing of radio—or to be exact it knew of radio transmission as a curious laboratory experiment, the Hertzian waves—and its ideas about atoms and the statement of physical processes, were naive in the extreme. We doubted if aviation was possible, we doubted if electric traction was possible, we associated submarines with the fantasies of Jules Verne, and we considered his *Around the World in Eighty Days* an extravagant dream. Our interpretation of mental actions was trivial and shallow almost beyond comparison with what we have now.

As I compare the world as I see it now with that world I contemplated fifty years ago, I realise how greatly the picture has unfolded and how much understanding has intensified. So far as its scale and texture go, so far as space and time, the atoms and the threads and substance of the picture go, the world as I see it to-day is altogether more marvellous, mysterious and profound.

It is not only that our analysis of the rhythms and interplay of the physical elements of the universe has been elaborated

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The scientific vision of life in the universe and no other has to be his vision of the universe. Any other leads ultimately to disaster. And since the existing educational organisation of the world does not provide anything like that vision nor establish the necessary conceptions of right conduct that arise out of it, it needs to be recast quite as much and even more than the political framework needs to be recast. This may involve, it will almost certainly involve, such a *kultur-kampf* as the world has never seen before. But since it is the only possible line of survival, that effort has to be faced. Unless there is sufficient mental and moral vigour in our race to achieve the educational readjustment, then there seems to be nothing that can possibly arrest the present *dégringolade* of *Homo sapiens*.

### § 9

## SAMPLE OF A GENERATION

LET US BE AS full and explicit as possible about this reorganisation of man's mental superstructure, this reconditioning of his apparatus for adaptation that we are stressing.

And here again there is nothing original and hardly anything that is fairly controversial in what will be stated here. The only originality lies in an adherence to one consistent line of thought, to carrying the broad and practically indisputable statements of modern ecological science, unimpaired, into the field of current human affairs and refusing to be deflected or complicated by secondary and irrelevant considerations.

It happens to have been my role throughout life to assemble facts, and interpretations of fact, bearing upon man's power of controlling his future. From the days of that paradoxical fantasy, *The Time Machine* (1894), onward, my mind, partly no doubt by the accidents of life, but partly also, I think, by a natural predisposition, has been directed more and more definitely to the question of what is likely to happen in the future. And looking back upon this half-century of discussion and suggestion and tracing its development phase by phase, a very remarkable change in the whole tenor of human thought becomes manifest.

## THE OUTLOOK FOR HOMO SAPIENS

borrowing a phrase from Dr. John Beattie Crozier,<sup>1</sup> I launched the idea of a "Bible" for civilisation. In this idea of a "Bible" for the new social and political order, it is plain that Dr. Crozier and myself were groping our way and getting very near to a full realisation of the scale and nature of the mental readjustment incumbent upon the world. This new "Bible" of ours is the World Encyclopædia, to which I am coming, in embryo. I will not recapitulate the various other papers, pamphlets, books, with which I documented my successive mental readjustments, because they are ceasing to have anything more than a minor, personal significance. I was travelling along a road that a number of my contemporaries were following.

Step by step the more responsive elements in my generation were being forced towards a complete recognition of the need for a realistic preparation for the future, if our existence henceforth was to be anything better than a mechanical response to the blows of adverse fate that were beating upon us now, faster and faster. We were asking "What shall we do?" and more realistically "What have we to do?" and it was plain that the answers to these questions needed setting down as the necessary articles of association for a world-wide revolutionary effort. There may have been a slight slackening of this mental fermentation during the phase of the Fatuous Twenties, but it was revived with the mounting sense of urgency that came with the Frightened Thirties. Crisis appeared following crisis, each more menacing than the last—it was like the Pacific surf coming in before a rising gale—and what had we prepared for these crises?

By the early thirties I was one of those who were becoming fully aware that the systematic reconditioning of our mental life was not a secondary but a primary need for all mankind. It has beyond all question become now the most urgent and important thing in the world.

And also I was realising the unsatisfactoriness of such detached, unco-ordinated work as writers of my type were doing. A number of us were all saying very much the same sort of thing, without much co-ordination or anything mutual in the way of consequences. We could plead that we were pioneering and exploring, but that is merely a provisional plea. There comes

<sup>1</sup> See Note 9B for his dates and two chief works.

## INTRODUCTION

has become an imperative necessity. Fifty years ago none of us dreamt of the freedom and fullness of life that is now a plain possibility for everyone. To many hopeful people in the past few decades an age of power, freedom and abundance has seemed close at hand. Eye has not seen nor ear heard, it is only now entering into the human imagination to conceive, the wonder of the years to come.

And now suddenly we are confronted by a series of distresses and disasters, of a nature to convince the most hopeful of us that all this happy assurance was premature. We anticipated too easily, too greedily and too uncritically. These new powers, inventions, contrivances and methods, are not the unqualified enrichment of normal life that we had expected. They are hurting, injuring and frustrating us increasingly. They are proving dangerous and devastating in our eager but unprepared hands. We are only beginning to realise that the cornucopia of innovation may perhaps prove far more dangerous than benevolent.

What we may call the scientific world has recognised this quite recently. There have been great stirrings of conscience in various scientific organisations upon the question of the misuse of science and invention, and how far the man of science may be held responsible for that misuse. The Associations for the Advancement of Science in Britain, America and Australia have been moving under the initiatives of such men as Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins, Lord Rutherford and Sir Richard Gregory. The British Association has created a special Division, not merely a new section but a sort of collateral to itself, for the study of the social relations of science. The fate of this Division will be of considerable interest from our point of view. I have been privileged to attend some of its deliberations and two divergent lines of tendency have been very evident. One is plainly to organise and implement the common creative impulse in the scientific mind so as to make it a vital factor in public opinion; that was the original impulse which evoked the Division; the other is to restrain any such development of an authoritative and perhaps embarrassing criticism of the conduct of public affairs and to keep the man of science modestly to his present subordination.

It would carry us too far afield to discuss here how far the consciences of men of science may be able to get the upper

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else for them to do. The oligarchy is privileged, it has to be served first at table with everything, office, honours, opportunity, but it is not exclusive, and that is one of the factors in its continued existence.

I do not know of any comprehensive study of the education and training of the British ruling class throughout the ages. The feudal world was limited enough for a lord to get away with very little reading and writing. He had his clerk, his cleric, at his elbow, and he felt he could keep his eye on him. His world was all in sight. Leech, lawyer and priest knew their places and stuck to them. The renaissance and the coming of the printed book altered all that. The medieval universities were swarms of poor scholars. The gentleman of the renaissance had his tutor at home and went to grammar school and university. The grammar school became the narrowing portals through which the poor scholar had now to pass on his way to the learned professions. The Latin and Greek classics came into the Western world first as a stimulant and then, as the pedagogues watered learning down to scholarship, as a distinctive culture. The British oligarchy of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries conceived of itself as Roman patri-cians and was rather ashamed of its illiterate members. It made the grand tour with its tutor, achieved a sort of French and Italian and became artistic and architectural. The apt classical quotation adorned the Parliamentary debates into the middle of the nineteenth century. After that it became infrequent. It was not that the classics were going out of fashion but that the standard of learning was sinking.

Culturally the British oligarchy was at its best in the seventeenth century. It knew what it wanted and how to get it. It managed its estates ably. It built fine houses, it made great progress in agriculture; its younger sons went into trade and spread adventurously into America, India, China. A prolific Protestant clergy supplemented the supply of enterprising young men. Yet a shadow fell upon the outlook with the Hanoverian importation, and Pope's *Dunciad* marked the change. The Goddess Dullness is enthroned:

“And at her fell approach and secret might  
Art after art goes out and all is night.”

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hand of a trained and experienced governing class so as to insist upon such collective ideals as they are able to formulate, and how far a trained and experienced governing class may manœuvre this medley of distressed and protesting intelligences into the position of a roster of mere "experts" available if called upon by the authorities, and otherwise out of consideration. The odds seem to me to be in favour of the latter possibility.

It is conceivable that the scientific worker is even now walking into a net; that increasing areas of his enquiries and experiments are falling under the restrictions of "official secrets"; and that far beyond the more obvious realms of physics and chemistry, fields of investigation that have no direct bearing upon warfare are likely to come under control, as favouring subversive ideas undermining the military morale of the community. In Nazi Germany this has happened already to psychological science, to mathematical physics and ethnology—matters quite outside armament and strategy. An almost complete strangulation of the unhampered publication and exchanges of the free scientific period is visibly within the range of contemporary possibility, and the world of scientific workers, as we know them, even with that "Division" to rally them, appears a feeble folk to resist the influences making for that extinction.

No one has ever explored the bases of intellectual freedom in the modern community, and they may prove to be far more flimsy than the intellectual worker, flinging his mind about in the apparent security of his study, imagines.

It is not simply the forcible misuse of purely mechanical inventions that is producing such frightening retrogressions of those brave, free hopes that culminated in the later twenties. Every fresh development of radio, of the film and mass information generally, and all the new educational devices to which we had looked for the rapid spread of enlightenment and a common world understanding, are being subordinated more and more to government restriction and the service of propaganda. They were to have been the artillery of progress. They are rapidly being turned against our mental freedoms with increasing effectiveness.

Plainly it is high time we looked more closely into the causes of these disconcerting frustrations of our recent large

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still shoot with distinction; others devote much time and attention to fly-fishing; others again cultivate gardens and watch birds. They have developed a peculiar literature of their own; memoirs, biographies and autobiographies, collections of letters and speeches, which establish their social values and supply them with patterns for the careers they follow. This constitutes the bulk of their reading. So equipped, the British oligarchy, at the head of a vast and scattered medley of dominions, crown colonies, mandated territories, India, faces the vast occasions of our time.

It is questionable whether it faces them with any ideas about their future at all. Or its own future or any future. Like the Catholic Church, its main purpose seems to be to hold on, aimless except for self-preservation. It means to go on with the sort of life its fathers have left it, for ever if possible, and that apparently is all it means. Crown, Church, lords and gentry will just stick at what they are where they are, until something shatters and replaces them. And they will do this not out of any essential wickedness but because in fact they know of nothing better to do.

The English-speaking world produces an abundance of thought and new ideas, and it has a reading public sufficiently large to secure the translation of any really original book written in any language under the sun. But that reading public is widely dispersed and the major part of it is probably outside the boundaries of the Empire. The British ruling class is shy of ideas and imaginative creation, it dreads and hates what it calls highbrow conversation, and it can have very little time to explore beyond its distinctive literature of personalities. A number of concepts and understandings, a vast multitude of facts, that are known and clear to all well-informed people, seem never to have entered the British ruling-class mind or to have entered it only in a crippled or belittled state.

Here again, just as in our examination of the mutual unawareness of Catholicism and scepticism, we may fall into the error of imagining that what is known to us must necessarily be known to other people. But in reality these people who rule the British Empire do not wilfully ignore a great number of things, they are simply ignorant of them or ignorant about them—which is quite a different matter. Ever since the first French Revolution, for example, the mind of the British ruling



## WHAT IS ECOLOGY ?

bright anticipations of a world of plenty and expansion. What is the real position of *Homo sapiens* in relation to his environment? Has he the mastery we assumed he had, or did we make a profound miscalculation of his outlook? Have we been indulging in hopeful assumptions rather than facing the realities of his case? Upon that question the subsequent summary concentrates.

### § 2

## WHAT IS ECOLOGY ?

SINCE THE DAY WHEN Herbert Spencer launched the word "Sociology" upon the world, the study of the general question of *what is happening to mankind* has made great advances. Sociology—or, to give it a more recent and better name, human ecology—has become a real science, analysing operating causes and forecasting events. Our awareness of our circumstances is altogether more lucid than the world outlook even of our fathers. We have, flowing into the problem of human society, a continually more acute analysis of its population movements, of its economic processes, of the relation of its activities to the actual resources available. We no longer talk with quite the same pompous ignorance as the history teachers of our youth of the rise and decay of Empires and of the march of civilisation from East to West—or from West to East, it is much the same—and suchlike plausible caricatures of the current of events. With the increase in our knowledge and understanding quite new conceptions of the prospects and problems of humanity unfold before us.

The infiltration of biological ideas into sociology and human history, it has to be recognised, is a process still only beginning. The enlightenment of the middle nineteenth century through the destructive analysis of the Creation myth, went on in the face of vast resistances, and not the least of these were in the schools. The new conceptions threatened the very bases of belief on which right conduct seemed to rest. Men shrank from following out the plain

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luctantly, she now faces towards Cosmopolis. The republic was the creation of Chinese students who had been educated abroad or by foreign missions, and mostly they had been trained in America. Never before had there been a Chinese revolution fostered in exile. But this last one, like the kindred Russian one, was made by expatriates. Its revolutionary technique followed Western patterns. The Chinese Republicans borrowed ideas from the Communist Party, and the organisation of the Kuomintang provided a nexus for the restless and intelligent throughout the Empire. Numerically the Kuomintang, like the Communist Party in Russia in 1917, was a relatively small organisation, but it was the only thing that had continuity and a definite will of its own in an otherwise planless chaos.

This is not the place to review the stormy confusion of Chinese affairs since the establishment of the Republic;<sup>1</sup> the experimental policies of Sun Yat Sen and the significance of his will, the treason of Yuan Shih Kai and his transitory usurpation of the Imperial throne, the clumsy attempts of the Russian Borodin to introduce an uncongenial class war and to revive xenophobia in the form of anti-British Imperialism as a fundamental motive. He failed, and returned to obscurity in Russia, but the Party, under Chou En-lai, organised a successful peasant communist state in Kiangsi—I say peasant communist because there was no attempt at collective farming—and a very efficient Red Army. Driven out of Kiangsi, this Red Army retreated fighting for six thousand miles in one of the greatest retreats in history, and stood at last with its back to Soviet Russia in Shensi and the north-west. The intricate struggles between the Nanking government, the private armies of various war-lords and the Red Army, need not concern us, nor the romantic and mysterious cessation of the war against the “Reds”. The fact became apparent to the Japanese that slowly and steadily China was being unified under one government. There was no time to lose. Like a fiery new birth came the tragic consolidation of the Chinese national spirit in the face of intolerable Japanese outrages. To-day under the military and administrative ability of the energetic Chiang Kai Shek we have a China more united and purposeful than it has ever been before, and apart from its resolve for complete national emancipation, more incalculable

<sup>1</sup> A compact summary is to be found in *China Struggles or Unity*, by J. D. M. Pringle and Marthe Rajchman.

## THE OUTLOOK FOR HOMO SAPIENS

implications of the new discoveries. And so either they were denied, irrationally and frantically, or they were minimised, they were admitted, yes, but as obscure, remote matters that had little or no significance in the "broader issues" of life. So that they could be taught in a sterilised form or ignored altogether. There was a period of controversy, very disastrous to the old dogmas, and then a phase of defensive silences. Open fighting was abandoned and the established beliefs dug themselves in.

It is still possible for bright youngsters at the universities to enter upon the "advanced" study of history, philosophy and economics in the blackest ignorance of general biology. A majority of them remain in that ignorance, with a deepening scholastic hostility to this science, which sits like a neglected creditor at their doors. They have established a social prejudice against this dreaded line of thought and body of knowledge in which they have no share. They succeed in putting it upon the all too snobbish and sensitive young that somehow the biological reference is not quite the thing. It isn't *done*. It isn't to be thought about. There is an indecency in it. The young university philosopher, historian or economist is in many cases not so much biologically ignorant as biology-proofed.

It is because of such mental gaps and barriers that it is necessary to recapitulate here certain facts about life, which, although they are matters of general knowledge to-day beyond question and almost beyond cavil, might nevertheless, so far as any effective realisation of their bearing upon our general social political and religious behaviour goes, be totally unknown. Yet they bear upon the problems of the present urgently. Contemporary political discussion remains indeed mere maundering empiricism, a tissue of guesses, ill-founded assertions and gossip, until they are brought into court.

This contrast of established knowledge and its effective application is a very remarkable one. Men can know a thing and yet know it quite ineffectively if it contradicts the general traditions and habits in which they live. It is well to understand that at this stage in our analysis, because it bears very directly upon the review of human possibilities to which this summary is directed.

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What is happening to the body of Russia, beyond these personal feuds and conspiracy hunts? It may be that in this matter my wish is father to my thought, but at any rate I believe that a more or less complete restoration of intellectual liberty in Russia in the next few years is a quite possible thing. The Russian, who, like the Englishman or the American, has grown up in an atmosphere of less immediate militant stress, is not nearly so docile as the German. There is an ineradicable disposition to humour and laughter in these less controlled peoples. They are earlier adult. I cannot suppose that the Nazi regime would tolerate for a moment those popular stories by Michael Zoshchenko, which hold up the weaknesses and discomforts of the Soviet regime to the gayest ridicule. Laughter can dissolve prison bars; it can outflank prohibitions. Russian writers are beginning to take liberties.

The Russian mind is an insubordinate mind and an untidy one. This virtue and this vice may be two aspects of one quality. Russian thought lacks and needs the restraint of the more disciplined Western intelligence. It has that courage and irresponsibility which we associate with genius. A release of intellectual energy in Russia, corresponding with and responding to the appearance of a reorganisation of knowledge and collective purpose and judgment in the West would have a vastly stimulating effect upon the thought and will of the entire world. It would be an event of cardinal importance in the mental reorganisation of mankind. And in the brightness of this new beginning it would hardly be observed that the Communist Party, the Comintern, too narrow, too insincerely dogmatic and "too clever by half" had unobtrusively disappeared, as I suppose that sooner or later it must do.<sup>1</sup>

### § 22

## AMERICAN MENTALITY

FINALLY, IN THIS STOCKTAKING of human forces, we come to the countries more directly affected by the American and French

<sup>1</sup> See F. Borkenau's *The Communist International* (1938), a history which is also an analysis.

## § 3

## BIOLOGY INVADES HISTORY

ONE OF THE MOST striking differences between the outlook of our grandparents and that of a modern intelligence to-day is the modification of time values that has occurred.

By the measure of our knowledge their time-scale was extremely shallow. They had scarcely any historical perspective at all. They looked back to a past of a few thousand years and at the very *beginning* of time, as they conceived it, they saw human life very much as it is now: it was a more or less balanced system of certain social types: rulers and ruled, hunter and cultivator, priest and soldier. This they regarded as the immemorial life of man. They saw the life of city and cultivated land, desert and sea, throughout all the interval, spreading perhaps, changing in a few particulars, enriched rather than altered by inventions and discoveries, but essentially the same. Their range of observation and comparison was too limited for them to realise that by clearing forests, overstocking grasslands, destroying soil, they were slowly impoverishing and devastating many of the regions into which they spread. They did not connect the rise and fall of empires with a factor of unforeseeing waste in that normal life of theirs. They ascribed such drifting of population and energy as they observed to other causes. These processes of primitive waste were too relatively slow to be perceptible from lifetime to lifetime. So these thinkers of yesterday talked of unchanging human nature. You cannot change human nature, they said. They relied upon the fabled promise of the rainbow, they had it straight from the Creator's mouth, that while the earth still remained, seed-time and harvest should endure.

The order of events seemed a sure, unfailing routine. And in much the same way, our ancestors, until a couple of dozen centuries ago, thought the world was flat. They thought the sea they sailed upon flat without qualification, and it required a considerable amount of mental exercise for them to realise that the apparent plane of the ocean surface was

## THE OUTLOOK FOR HOMO SAPIENS

### § 23

#### THREE FACTORS IN EVERYONE

WE HAVE NOW EXPOSED, in stripped outline, the primary facts in world affairs at the present time. In all these matters have written with the complete freedom of a biologically trained and uncontrolled observer. Sir Arthur Salter, for example, in his *Security. Can we retrieve it?* (1939), writes with all the discretions and reserves of a responsible politician who has to think and speak within the conventions that I, in my entire irresponsibility, can repudiate and kick aside. His thoughts are capped and gowned and mine are stark. He has an air of scarcely recognising the realities I assemble. Nevertheless his intelligence and integrity are manifestly forcing him towards a conception of public policy and the human future essentially the same as those I have stated concisely and brutally here.<sup>1</sup>

The cultural summaries made in the preceding sections from § 11 onward may be offensive to many readers, if only because of their plainness, but they have been made with deliberation, they have been sustained when necessary by citation, and they will be much easier to run away from than to disprove. The political map is imposed upon these primary factors and more or less conditioned by them, very much as it is imposed upon a contoured physical map of the world. It entirely distorts the truth to attempt to reduce this complex struggle for existence to any left and right antagonism. At the maximum simplification we have still to distinguish three absolutely divergent trends in ourselves and in the world about us. Each of these trends has its variations, but these variations can be put very easily as species under one or other of these three genera. The divergence of the three main trends remains complete.

The first of these trends embodies the inveterate disposition of the normal man to accept his immediate circumstances as he finds them and make the best of them for himself. He sticks to the creed he is born to or to the alternative culture

<sup>1</sup> See Note 23A for a quotation from his *Epilogue*.

## HOW SPECIES SURVIVE

to face. And it is also being forced upon our reluctant attention that the species *Homo sapiens* is no privileged exception to the general conditions that determine the destinies of other living species. It prospers or suffers under the same laws. These laws can be stated compactly, and there is nowadays very little dispute about them, even in matters of detail.

### § 4

## HOW SPECIES SURVIVE

WHAT IN GENERAL TERMS are the relations of a species to the world about it?

A species may be living in practical harmony with its environment or it may be more or less out of balance with its surroundings.

In the former case it may continue recognisably the same species, living the same life, age after age. Any tendency to excessive numbers may be corrected by a correlated increase in the types that prey upon it, and there will be no definite biological encouragement for such variations and mutations as occur. Harmless mutations may indeed produce varieties and sub-species, and, as Henry Fairfield Osborn long ago pointed out, there may be purely mutational efflorescences; the correlation of a species to its environment is never hard and exact; but only a minority of mutations seem to be without some quality of advantage or disadvantage. Abnormal individuals in a species in practical equilibrium will generally be eliminated, and the species as a whole will pursue the even tenor of its way indefinitely.

There are species that have been under no necessity to adjust themselves to circumstances over vast periods of geological time. But they are exceptions to the general ecological spectacle of species balancing themselves in a changing world. Most existing species, when their affairs are scrutinised as a whole, are discovered to be in a state of imperfect adjustment to their circumstances, and to be either undergoing adaptation to meet new requirements or to be losing ground in the struggle—if one may call anything so

## THE OUTLOOK FOR HOMO SAPIENS

essentially passive a struggle—to survive. Over a large part of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, adaptation, the working adjustment of the species under stress, is made, if it is made at all, by the selective frustration and killing off of less well-adjusted individuals. Variations and mutations—it is not necessary to enter here into the controversial questions of their causes; suffice it that they occur—variations and mutations, indifferent, favourable and unfavourable, play a considerable part in this selective adjustment. The adjustment is either sufficient or insufficient. In the latter case, the species dwindles and disappears. In the former, the species undergoes modification; it survives, changed, as a new species or as several new species according to the imperatives of its altered conditions.

All this again is practically common knowledge to-day. Most educated people know about it even if they do not think very much about it, or link it up with other systems of ideas in their minds. It needs to be repeated plainly here in view of that possibility of disregard.

The general history of life in the past is, as everybody knows, one of failure and defeat rather than adaptation. Great groups of living things have arisen, had their heyday, and then passed altogether from the scene, giving place to more plastic and adaptable forms of life. Comparatively, insignificant forms with novel accommodations arise to take their place.

When we contemplate that greater past that science has unfolded for us, we see great groups and orders of mighty creatures dominating the earth, enormous reptiles, huge mammals flourishing and then waning and passing away. They have not kept pace with change; their exuberance has been almost a defiance of change; and change has overcome and obliterated them. The geological record can be presented, certain assumptions being granted, as on the whole a great progression, but that does not alter the fact that it is also a history of the ruthless extinction of whole species, genera and orders of living things. There are tremendous massacres in the geological record.

One of the greatest of these occurred at the close of the Mesozoic period, when in the course of perhaps only a few hundred thousand years, a vast reptilian fauna, ichthyosaurus,



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plesiosaurus, tyrannosaurus and so forth, an equally wonderful flora, scores of genera of ammonites and so on and so forth, were thrust out of existence. We know little or nothing of the changes that made so many hitherto successful forms of life impossible. We know surely only that they occurred. A change from conditions of all-the-year-round equable temperature to wide seasonal alternations of heat and cold may have resulted from some planetary disturbance. More recently there have been parallel massacres of groups of the early mammals, and there can be no question that to-day we are, from the geological point of view, living in a phase of exceptional climatic instability, in a series of glacial and interglacial ages, and witnessing another destruction of animal and plant species on an almost unparalleled scale. The list of species extinguished in the past hundred years is a long one; the list of species threatened with extinction to-day is still longer. No new species arise to replace those exterminated. It is a swift, distressful impoverishment of life that is now going on. And this time the biologist notes a swifter and stranger agent of change than any phase of the fossil past can show—*man*, who will leave nothing undisturbed from the ocean bottom to the stratosphere, and who bids fair to extinguish himself in the process.

This species man is, as we all know, one of a great series of species which we can speak of roughly as cerebral animals. These are the mammals who have dominated the earth since the beginning of the Tertiary period and which display throughout a rapid development on the cerebral cortex. This cerebral cortex was a novelty in the history of life, and it brought with it a fresh, distinctive method of individual adaptation to special circumstances. It quickened the response of a species to changing conditions very greatly. Learning from experience appears indeed but very rudimentarily in cold-blooded vertebrata; it is only in the birds and mammals, and particularly in the latter that it becomes of real importance in adaptation. Essentially the cerebrum is an organ for the storage and application of memories. It enables individuals to learn by experience. The history of the mammals in particular is a history of memory development. All through the Tertiary period, it is to be noted, brains in every group of mammals increase in relative size and complexity. With every increase, the

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AT THIS POINT AGAIN it may be well to take stock of the discussion we are unfolding. We have been restating, very plainly and directly, established facts in general ecology, and we are going on now to develop this restatement in relation to the particular position and outlook of the human species. There is no need to apologise for this biological résumé, elementary though it is. It is vitally necessary to our statement. It is absolutely impossible to approach the urgent and distressful problems of the present time with any hope of lucid solution until this general background of knowledge is definitely present in the mind.

From now on we shall encounter an increasing amount and variety of resistance to our application of these almost universally admitted facts. From this point on, many readers will be quite unaccustomed to seeing human social life in the light of ecological science. There is a sort of barrier in their minds. It is not because they do not know, but because they see the two sets of facts apart. They will experience a strong resistance to this invasion of this reserved region of human affairs by these really quite incontrovertible ideas, because in this reserved region their minds are already strongly occupied by idea systems that are incompatible with it.....

It has been pointed out how the species of brain-animals co-operate with circumstances in teaching their offspring to adapt themselves to the exactions of their environment. But in the case of man, and to a quite exceptional extent, because of an immense development of speech and gesture, the taught stuff in the cerebrum becomes of overpoweringly greater importance than mere hard experience, and we find the behaviour system of the individual moulded to social co-operation and collective needs, not only by tradition and other forms of education but by institutions and law. Man, above everything else, is an educated animal, socially controlled. He is no longer primarily or even mainly a creature of instinct and brief individual experience. That phase in evolution lies a million

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years behind him. His instincts, alone and without correction, would fail him utterly as a behaviour control in his present circumstances.

There is a relatively enormous artificial supplement to the natural man in all of us. We talk of our "selves" and of being freemen, but much the greater part of our activities to-day we perform as parts *not* of one simple, greater organism, human society, *but*, what is more complex, as parts of a number of greater organisms—profession, township, nation, religion, club, class, and so forth, which are all woven together into what we call human society and our social reactions. What we do as purely spontaneous individuals is hardly more than a narrow choice between prescribed things. The home we live in, the clothes we wear, the food we eat, the way we go about the world, are all substantially imposed upon us by forces exterior to our personalities. They are social products, and more and more do they become social products.

The socialisation of human life, the relative increase of the factor supplied by society, is still going on quite rapidly. There was a time, for instance, not so many generations ago, when most people built their own homes, made their own clothes, got their own food, taught their own children. *Now* the building trade, clothing trade, the provision shop, and the public school see to all that.

This applies with even greater truth to our minds. A mere fraction of our knowledge is self-taught. What we know again is nine-tenths hearsay. We have heard, we have read. The stuff in our heads was mainly put there by society. To the biologist an ordinary ape is just a natural ape, but a man is a normal man *plus* a great cerebral accumulation of directive ideas, prejudices, antagonisms, tolerances and conceptions of what he ought and ought not to do, which wrap about him and fit him into the social body to which he belongs. From the biological point of view all this cerebro-social accumulation of knowledge, belief and ideas, responsibilities and dependency, is as much a natural adjustment to needs and environment as a claw or a skull or a swimming bladder; it is a thing of the same kind, though it differs enormously in the relative swiftness and breadth of its adaptability to changing conditions. It is subject to the same ecological laws.

The growth of this mental superstructure upon the primi-

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tive ape-man of the later Tertiary period can now be traced in its broad lines without very much difficulty. Any attempt to make a general outline of human history falls almost uncontrollably into the form of a story of developing communication, learning and co-operation between the primordial ape-man family groups. The outline of history as one whole is, and must be, a history of communication and socialisation. It is compelled to apprehend primary processes that the older type of history, with its preoccupation with separate communities, was equally compelled to ignore. It begins necessarily with the origins of speech, gesture, drawing, observances and taboos.

With every such development the association of human animals in groups, collectively more efficient in the appropriation of food supplies, became easier. The family group grew into the tribe and tribes grew larger. Their growing awareness of the seasons is apparent in the archæological record; their growing ability to co-operate in the semi-domestication of animals and the first agricultural tentatives is now quite clearly traceable. These are no longer matters to dispute about. With the development of agriculture and the beginnings of settlement, man, the new sort of socialised man, appears as a rapid and immense biological success. His growing communities spread swiftly, growing as well as multiplying and spreading, and displaying every symptom of an unprecedented surplus of biological energy.

A few millenia ago the life which our great-grandfathers considered to be the normal and immemorial life of mankind was well under way. It had grown up, biologically speaking, speaking by the standards of geological time, with the rapidity of a puff-ball, and those who lived it were unaware that there had ever been any other way of human living. Such was life. And it was still, although they did not perceive it in the least, under a stress of accelerating change.

The changes in the conditions of human life during the last twenty or thirty thousand years have been mainly brought about by the acceleration of invention through increasing co-operation and the release of material and social power. There have been no doubt climatic and geographical changes, but their share has been relatively less important. The essential story of history and pre-history is the story of the adaptation of the social-educated superstructure of the animal man to the novel

problems with which his own enterprise and inventiveness have been continually confronting him. Law, religion, education are from the ecological point of view names we give to the cardinal aspects of this process of adaptation. Each generation in these growing and spreading societies was told a story of its relation to the community into which it had to fit itself and given an account of the acquiescences and co-operations expected from it. The imperatives of law, education, religion, all flowing into one another and sustaining one another, were expressed, and in these early stages of mental development could only be expressed, by anthropomorphic myths. Natural selection has no care for scientific precision. There is no immediate survival value in truth. To this day the survival value of the critical habit of mind is questionable. It sufficed for the purposes of nature if the myths and the system of observance, the things that were too awful to do and the things that it was fatal to leave undone, made for the survival of the community as a whole. The adaptive superstructures, the laws, rules and beliefs that were favouring human survival, varied in different regions, but they varied within the limits set by the conditions of specific survival. A certain primary resemblance of the tribal gods and of the tribal stories and of the behaviour systems of the differentiating social classes waited upon the spread of the "normal" way of life about the earth. Parallel circumstances evoked parallel adjustments. Generally the pattern included a tribal ancestor god, a priesthood taking care of the calendar and medicine, a morality of propitiation and self-restraint.

Step by step, as human inter-communication increased, communities grew larger. And as they grew larger they developed something, of which curiously enough we are only beginning to grasp the profound importance to-day; they developed a superfluity of young men.

From the point of view of the biologist *Homo sapiens* was making an almost excessive success. He was repeating the exuberance of the great Mesozoic reptiles or the early Tertiary deinotheria. The species was not only holding its own, it was spreading and multiplying by leaps and bounds. And the front of its biological advance was this surplus of young men. Young men, full of beans as people say, and looking for trouble.

Hitherto historians have failed to recognise the great importance of this trouble-making stratum. It is well to

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underline it here. It is a primary social fact. I have been reading recently the works of Mark Benney, *Low Company* and *The Truth about English Prisons* (Fact, March 1938), who is rapidly becoming a leading authority on criminology, and he reminds me very strikingly how nonsensical it is to talk of a criminal class as a different sort of human being. It is in its origins more and more of an age class. Every sort of energetic male human being is a potential criminal, if nothing else is found to occupy and interest him. These expanding human societies in the past were needing less and less energy per head to be sure of their food supply and security. Something had to be done to and for these young men, and the easiest way of keeping them out of mischief, keeping them disciplined in fact and the numbers of them down, was war.

Primitive war was a necessity forced upon the human community by biological success through the production of a surplus of young males. It appeared with herding and agriculture and it was naturally associated with them. In Papua and the Mandated Territory of New Guinea one can still see humanity in a sort of equilibrium at that stage of development. There you have a population of over half a million, still living in small independent communities, each with its own conceit of itself, its peculiar petty customs and prejudices. These New Guinea peoples are by no means a monotony of barbarism. They present indeed a great variety of physical and mental types, and their social and artistic possibilities are very considerable. Up to the present they have solved their population pressure by spells of not too destructive warfare. There is a little killing-off and then things settle down again. Now, under the parental care of the Canberra government, their warfare is to cease, and what will happen to these peoples is very uncertain. They may be subjected to economic exploitation far more tragic than warfare.

You can write human history in a variety of ways, but one way of writing it would be to consider how, age after age, humanity has met the problem of *What to do with our Sons*. There was war and what was generally associated with war, conquest and colonisation. Roman Britain, for instance, was conquered by the surplus offspring of the Saxon shore. In my native country, Kent, traces survived until a very recent period of the custom of gavelkind. The elder sons were sent off

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Humanity got along in this way. War became part of the accepted human rhythm, just as the massacre of the drones is part of the natural rhythm of the honey bee. Laws, customs, morals, sentiments and thoughts were adapted to it so as to make it natural and easy. If it were not for the outbreak of invention and discovery during the past century, man might have gone on drumming and trumpeting his way through long ages yet to come, going to his priest to bless his flags, facing the day of battle bravely, and either dying on the field of honour, or surviving to raise another generation for the same experience.

But that inventive urge in the species has suddenly, in—what is by the geological and biological scales—a mere flash of time, altered all that. It has made war something entirely different and it has put quite a new face on the political ideas, the working conceptions of right and wrong, of duty and service that have hitherto kept the varied and fluctuating patchwork of human communities going. It has strained and distorted the problem of adaptive survival almost beyond recognition. That, concisely, is the clue to the human situation to-day.

Let me try to give the gist of this vast change. It is a change in human power and scope.

First as to the increase in socially available power. Before the change, except for a little wind power or water power, the only power available for human purposes was a little animal power, horse, ox, elephant, camel, llama, or what not, and man power. The gross total of power units that sufficed to run everything that was going on in Great Britain in a day in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, everything, was probably much less than the total of units that is consumed to-day in running the lighting and transport alone of such a city as Manchester or Kansas City. And again all the energy of marching, shooting, stabbing, hacking, running to and fro at the Battle of Agincourt was probably less than the energy released by one single high explosive shell in a modern bombardment.

Until this change in the total of available power occurred, the great majority of mankind toiled habitually to get food, clothing and shelter. They were under an obligation to do so or want. A small minority contrived in various ways to live by the toil of others and spend, and except for such parasitism there was no way to leisure. Now a steadily dwindling number of people, using power machinery and modern con-

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trivances, can produce the essentials of life in excess of all our requirements. Never before in the history of life has any animal had such a fantastic increase in its ability to make or destroy.

That is the first aspect of the contemporary change. A second is what is called the abolition of distance. Even more fantastic in relation to past tradition is the increase of speed from point to point. The maximum of speed at which an Elizabethan man could travel was limited by a horse. He could send an uncertain and difficult message a hundred miles a day. He had beacon fires of course, but they do not carry any explicit messages.<sup>1</sup> He could see for a few miles. Now abruptly this creature can travel in comfort three hundred miles an hour, he can see and talk to his fellow-man on the other side of the earth, he can murder him at vast, increasing distances, he knows what is happening all over the world almost instantaneously. And his health improves and his vitality is greater. On the average he lives almost twice as long and twenty times as actively and variously as his great-great-grandfather. Now that distance has been abolished, he lives with increasing restlessness cheek by jowl with all the rest of mankind. So far a biologist might count him an unqualified success in the struggle for life—except for one disconcerting thing. He is ceasing to breed. His numbers are now passing a maximum and seem fated to decline, at least for some decades ahead. Woman for a variety of reasons is betraying an increasing disinclination to bear children. Man's conquest of nature may prove a sterile conquest.

His reproduction is falling off and his behaviour traditions and controls, and more particularly the war tradition, are producing the most devastating tragedies among his communities. The effect of the increase of power has been to exaggerate the impact of the war drive monstrously. One may compare the human species to-day to a steamship that has long sailed the seas with engines roughly adequate to its needs, until some malign influence has suddenly gone down into the engine-room and, without any consultation with the ship's officers, amplified the power of the engines a thousand-fold. Now they are flying loose out of control, lashing the ship to pieces, and threatening to sink it altogether. The captain upon the bridge gives impotent orders; the engineers dodge the pounding shafts and

<sup>1</sup> See Note 5b.



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the escaping, searching, scalding steam.

Because of the way in which science and invention have brought us all into intimate contact and put high explosives into our hands, war has become a process of destruction that spares neither age nor sex, it is no longer a selective elimination of the surplus young men, it is a colossal wastage of material resources, a rapid disintegration of the social organisation, robbed of all the glories and gallantries that once adorned it. In the past it was a corrective and almost tonic process. Now it has become a rapid wasting disease, a galloping consumption of the human species.

Is it possible for man to recover control, or is this shattering return to destructive violence the beginning of the end of the career of *Homo sapiens*? Let us hold firmly to the broad conceptions of ecological science that have brought us thus far. The human species is, as a whole, dangerously out of harmony with these new conditions. Either its powers of adaptation will be sufficient to readjust it to the new demands, and it will go on to a new phase of survival, or, like any other living species, it will be defeated, shattered and ultimately wiped out. There are no other possibilities.

There is no time for any of the slower and more ancient methods of adaptation. The readjustment needed must be a mental readjustment. In that alone is there any hope for mankind.

In view of what has gone before it is plain that that mental readjustment must involve three main essentials. In varying measure these essentials are already widely recognised.

First and most obviously, the idea and tradition of war must be eliminated. For that, quite a large number of people seem to be more or less prepared. They desire it, even if they have yet to discover the price that must be paid for it. Secondly, and what is not nearly so widely conceded, the vast and violent wastage of natural resources in the hunt for private profit, that went on during the nineteenth century, must be arrested and reversed by the establishment of a collective economy for the whole world. And thirdly, in view of the stress of those young people, the resultant world organisation must be of an active, progressive, imaginatively exciting nature. That surplus energy of youth, male and female, must be used up. It is the drive and essence of life; it is life itself. It must in each

realise now, was an extremely naive attempt to stop the current of history and to preserve for ever just those national separatisms and strangulating boundaries against which the stars in their courses are fighting. Certain minimum changes were to be made to "end war," while everything else was to go on just as it had been going on before. Sovereign states, organised essentially for defence and aggression, were to form a League to end combat. Simply that. The conception of an organised world pax, after it had played its part in the warfare of propaganda, after it had been used to build up false expectations of a new start in life for the German people, was taken over at Versailles and translated into the ideology of Foreign Offices and the diplomatic services. These essential organs of the old regime were instructed to supersede themselves and they were left to work out the task, and quite naturally they did nothing of the sort. The League Covenant completely disregarded that perennial problem of the restless young men, and it gave no attention to the absolute necessity of reconstructing economic life upon a collectivist basis throughout the world. These are matters about which diplomacy has never concerned itself. They do not enter into diplomatic or political education, which is at least the better part of a century out-of-date.

At the end of less than a score of years the failure of the League of Nations experiment is complete, and we will spend no time on enlarging upon that fruitless interlude of half-hearted idealism. Suffice it to say that for many excellent minds it has blocked the way to a realistic treatment of the human problem for two decades. We find now, in 1939, a rough reproduction of the world situation of 1914-18. We find three aggressive military states threatening the whole world, and we find a number of threatened states contemplating some sort of loosely organised resistance to that aggression.

How loosely—with what dangerous looseness—that organisation is still contemplated is illustrated by a book that has recently been given quite serious attention in Britain and America. This is *Union Now* by Clarence K. Streit. He proposes that, right now, there shall be a "federal" union of fifteen now independent states which he describes as democracies. They are the United States of America, the British group, Finland, France, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden. It is not a League or a war alliance he

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as you sort them out and arrange them that they do tend to converge and point in a common direction. There is a vital intention beneath the endless misuses and perversions of the word.

Towards what do these diverse statements converge ? What is the reality, implicit and potential, that gives its living, present appeal to the word *democracy* ?

Two words that will come out very frequently in the definitions that are given you are "freedom" and "liberty". Frequent, but not quite so frequent, are such phrases as the "right" of individuals and communities to "self-government". A few people will make a vote the symbol of democracy. But all of them can be brought into agreement that democracy means the subordination of the state to the ends and welfare of the common individual. Very prevalent is an attitude of negation. Democracy, it is declared, is an *anti* movement. It demands the protection of the individual life from the state. It is anti-Fascist, anti-Nazi, anti-Communist, anti-war—since there is no liberty in a state of siege—it is the denial of the right of the state organisation to interfere in the life of the common individual except for the common convenience and with the common consent.

All this is matter of general agreement, but in all these phrases there is an element of idealistic over-statement, and as soon as we attempt to bring them into effective contact with the realities of life, we find ourselves involved in some of the standing controversies that have exercised humanity since human thought and discussion began. We are reminded that there is no such thing as absolute freedom or absolute servitude. Limitless freedom, anarchy, would be a world of chaotic conduct, ruled only by impulse, a jungle life. All freedom in any society is conditional ; it is a compromise ; it implies "rules of the game", that is to say, law. Behind all actual social behaviour there is the suggestion of a defined give-and-take, a "social contract". The social contract may vary between the extremes of a contract of blind obedience on the one hand and a contract to undertake no collective action whatever without a plebiscite, an entirely impracticable subordination of the law to mass impulse, on the other. Between these extremes and with a declared bias for conscious, free, individual action whenever it is practicable, this *democracy* falls.

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expressed consent, and he has a reasonable right to attempt to alter them if he finds them uncongenial, but until they are altered they must be respected by all, small or great, in the community. The President or ruling assembly is as much bound by the law as the meanest citizen.

On the other hand the dictatorships and undemocratic social organisations generally, subject a large part of the common man's activities to uncovenanted restrictions, interference and compulsion. It is plainly contrary to the spirit of democracy that a man should sell himself into slavery or bind himself indefinitely to unquestioning obedience. The care of democracy for freedom extends to the protection of a man from his own desperate necessity. No democracy would tolerate Esau's bargain. Most existing dictatorships, indeed, claim a sort of legality based upon some forced plebiscite, some snatched election. But your enquiries will make it plain that the consent of the governed in a democracy can never be a finally silenced and irrevocable consent. It must be a *continuing consent*. It must be subject to sustained revision and renewal. From the point of view of democracy all absolutisms are illegal, and resistance to their commands is as justifiable as resistance to any less general hold-up or act of violence.

This fundamental legalism of democracy has been and is a deterrent to swift collective action, and the history of human government is very largely a history of attempts to reconcile the bickering gradualism of legal and deliberative government under democratic conditions with the needs of special emergencies. Before flood, fire, pestilence, earthquake, war, and especially in war, men have had to relinquish their liberty of individual action more or less completely to a higher command of some sort with unqualified immediate powers. The original "dictators" of the Roman system were essentially legal officials, and one of the primary riddles of human society has been the resumption of power by the community at the end of a period of crisis. A democracy needs to be in a state of perpetual vigilance against the specialist. From Cæsar to the present day democracy has been trapped into one-man tyrannies by crises.

But historical analogies are always misleading, and modern crises become more and more elaborate affairs and less and less controllable by single individuals. None of these modern dictatorships has yet been tried out in a sustained war. It is

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at least highly doubtful whether the vast communities of to-day, if they are able to develop a class of competent public servants, with a co-operative morale and a sense of public criticism, may not attain an efficiency and a toughness far beyond that of a system subjected to the freaks and inspirations of a single individual. But they must work in the light. They must work with the distinctive freedom and the conscious individual co-operation of a team of football players, and they must be subjected to the continual criticism of an understanding public opinion with unlimited freedom of expression and with an ultimate, if deferred, right of intervention.

This conception of the superior flexibility and efficiency of free teamwork, as against dictatorially planned work, is very attractive to the democratically-minded, but it may easily be exaggerated. For example, Tom Wintringham in his *English Captain* lays great stress on the technical superiority of free men, inspired by a common idea, over the conscript soldiers of a dictatorship. He was in the fortunate position of leading a battalion of English volunteers, exceptionally intelligent and enthusiastic, picked men who wanted to fight, who were keen to fight, and unanimous at least in their hostility to the Franco pronunciamento. Of such individuals, unanimous for the services that engage them, an enlightened democracy should no doubt consist. But when one turns to the story Major José Martín Blásquez tells in *I helped to build an Army*, of the internal struggles and indiscipline of the defenders of the Republic, one realises that practical freedom of initiative may achieve the most disastrous confusion.

There is indeed no guarantee of either immediate or ultimate victory in democracy. On that we must insist. There is no inherent magic successfulness in democratic freedom. Democratic freedom may be much more vulnerable than slavery, less easy both to attain and maintain. It may be that few or none of us realise yet the full price that may have to be paid for it.

None the less it is only through the attainment of a real world democracy that there is any hope for the ultimate survival of our species.

In many of the replies one will receive to the demand for a clear definition of democracy, one will get some reference to

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first French Revolution. That remains still a cardinal event in the history of human liberation. It was not the beginning of liberation but it was its most outstanding assertion. The democracy of America, the radicalism of Britain in its most vigorous phase, derived plainly from that French initiative. And since in those days titles and privileges were the most conspicuous infringements of men's liberties, democracy from the outset would have none of them ; it was equalitarian without qualification. It was republican, it denied and repudiated any form of class rule whatever—and wherever it is still in health it remains republican and equalitarian.

But conditions in eighteenth-century France were peculiar in the fact that then the conspicuous offence against human liberty was class privilege. For many people in those days the possession of private property was a means of independence, freedom of ownership seemed a reasonable provision for democratic liberty, and only a few realised that, released from class tyranny, the free play of proprietorship might create advantages and disadvantages as wide and socially wasteful, as subject to "abuses", as the class privileges of the older regime. Throughout the first revolutionary period the spirit of democracy found itself puzzled, mocked and frustrated by economic inequality. Men freed from the tyranny of privileges found themselves oppressed by a tyranny of advantages. The common man, theoretically free and independent, discovered himself in the grip of an expanding economic system that made free competitive employment only another form—and to many it seems a scarcely preferable form—of serfdom. Political equality by itself proved in practice to be no equality at all.

Accordingly when we pursue our enquiries into the meaning of democracy to-day, we find a definite cleavage from this point onward in the replies to the question of "What is democracy ?" An increasing number will be forced to agree that collective economic controls, "Industrial Democracy", as Beatrice Webb first phrased it very happily, in her study of co-operation (1891), constitute a necessary completion of the democratic proposition. A dwindling minority clings to the private profit system as the logical method of the sturdy individualism of the revolution. But the general implication of modern democracy is that unrestrained economic advantage can be an even graver infringement of human liberty than privilege.

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was anything exceptional in the knowledge and freedom of thought it enjoyed. It did not even apprehend its immense and immediate obligations to the Encyclopædists in organising its ideas. It took their contribution for granted. It launched its generous proposition of universal equality indeed, but not only did it fail to realise the need to ensure freedom from economic pressure, but also it neglected to organise the education of the community as one whole. The American Revolution, in this respect, with, for example, its provision of State universities, seems to have been ahead of the French. Nevertheless it took the better part of a century for democracy to realise, even to a limited extent, the third vital implication of its demand for liberty, equality and fraternity, which was the free and necessary universal education of the democratic community to a common level of understanding and co-operation. Communities in which every mentally normal citizen can at least read and write have existed for less than a century. Communities in which the common education rises much above that level do not yet exist.

That freedom and equality are incomplete without freely accessible knowledge and free and open discussion is a necessary completion of the democratic idea, but it is one upon which the enquirer into the meaning of democracy will get the least assurance. If he asks leading questions, he will get a general admission that universal education and sound, ample information upon every matter of collective concern are necessary elements in the democratic proposition, but unless he himself introduces the matter he will hear very little insistence upon this vital completion of the democratic ideal.

He will indeed encounter a certain amount of impatience if he stresses this matter. Ordinary people resent being told that they are under-educated or wrongly educated. To the common man and woman to-day, prepared though their minds seem to be now for a socialist cosmopolis of a quite generous type, education still means just any old education, and news is what a press run entirely for profit and political and social ends, and (in the British system) a government-controlled radio, choose to tell them. It is the education they have grown up to, and so far they have not been awakened to its insufficiency. They want to carry out these new conceptions of life at that level. To raise that level seems to them irksome and uncalled for.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note 6A.

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It is still possible therefore for the equalitarian impulse to be effectively frustrated in practice by deliberate and systematic mis-education and mis-information. The common man and woman know now in general terms and pretty definitely what they want, but they still do not know how to state and demand what they want. Private enterprise is able to defend its appropriations quite effectively, because it owns the press almost entirely, the news agencies and the distributing trades, and so it can distort values and distract the public from crucial issues in the boldest fashion. There is no counter-vailing equipment of the public mind in the common schools. These are essentially conservative institutions, adapting the common man to the social order in which he finds himself, preparing him for that state of life to which he has been called, and giving him no reasonable intimation of the great drama of change in which he has to play his part. As we have shown, the whole mechanism of modern life demands organised collective control. The stars in their courses will not suffer the world scramble of exploitation that wasted so much human possibility in the nineteenth century to go on. Our species cannot afford it under any conditions. But in face of the essential ignorance of the modern "democratic" community, the enterprising owner, the profiteer, that is to say, can keep his grip upon his advantages far more effectively than he can in the face of a dictator with unqualified powers. He can resist socialisation far more effectively.

Against the capitalist's obstructive power the wilfulness of the dictator is able to operate far more vigorously than the will of the under-educated, ill-informed and suggestible "democracies". So that in certain ways the dictatorships have undoubtedly been able to get ahead of the "democratic" states. They have gone further on the way to socialisation. While the industrial exploiter or the rich man struggles to keep his grip on the recalcitrant worker below, the dictator of the totalitarian state takes him firmly by the collar. Wealth finds itself handled with an extraordinary disrespect. Dictatorships imply collectivism. They are forced to collectivism in the face of bargaining wealth and the uneasy claims of their own supporters. They are forced towards a comprehensive efficiency. The only effective response to totalitarian collectivism on the part of a freedom-seeking community is a scientifically planned and directed socialism.



## WHAT IS DEMOCRACY ?

From the economic point of view, the whole difference now between the reality of dictatorship and the ideal of democracy, when it is worked out to its practical completion, is the difference between socialisation in the dark, with all the progressive corruption, appropriation and inefficiency that spring up in the dark, and socialisation in the light of an alert and implemented public opinion ; between socialisation by compulsion or socialisation by enlightened consent.

From the point of view of the individual the difference is one between a deadening servitude and a continual participating enlargement of responsible life. No existing institutions coming to us from the past can represent democracy as it is thus conceived ; it is a far bolder thrust towards a new order than any of these adventurer systems that stand in its path.

If now we fill in the gaps in the current conception of democracy by insisting upon complete educational equalitarianism, if we dot the *i*'s and cross the *t*'s that are still undotted and uncrossed, if we transcend any accepted contemporary rendering of the idea, then "democracy" does indeed become a very magnificent conception of a new life for man.

If democracy means economic justice and the attainment of that universal sufficiency that science assures us is possible today ; if democracy means the intensest possible fullness of knowledge for everyone who desires to know and the greatest possible freedom of criticism and individual self-expression for anyone who desires to object ; if democracy means a community saturated with the conception of a common social objective and with an educated will like the will of a team of football players to co-operate willingly and understandingly upon that objective ; if democracy means a complete and unified police control throughout the world, to repress the financial scramble and gangster violence which constitute the closing phase of the sovereign state and private ownership system ; then we have in democracy a conception of life for which every intelligent man and woman on earth may well be prepared to live, fight or die, as circumstances may require.

But that rounded-off and completed realisation of democracy is still only establishing itself against great resistances in the human mind. It is not as yet established there. And still less is it established as the guiding faith of any political or social organisation whatever.

## WHERE IS DEMOCRACY ?

cognise, a system of government almost completely out of popular control. Practically it has undergone a reactionary revolution in the last decade, and a loose-knit combination of court, church, army and wealth, intensely class-conscious, intensely self-protective, has resumed control of affairs. It is an oligarchy skilful in the assimilation of useful or formidable individuals but without the slightest disposition to amalgamate with anything else on earth. Its ruling motive is the fear of dispossession. Decisions involving peace or war are made without any pretence of consulting any surviving popular will, and the whole capitalist press, the cinema, the radio, and indeed all possible means of influencing opinion, concentrate upon the assertion of the rightness and inevitableness of these decisions. Dissent is a muffled and ineffective squeaking, and any inconvenient facts are kept from the public by requests for suppression that are in effect commands. There is a special Form D sent round to the press which it is extremely unwise to defy. Many of the acts of Mr. Chamberlain since September 1938 were as irresponsible as those of any Dictator, equally unscrupulous and far more shameful. He made himself a Dictator by tact and betrayal instead of by violent seizure. There is in the long run very little to choose between a bully dictatorship and a "tact" dictatorship. The latter may be less crushing but more insidious in its attack upon human dignity.

These are the practical realities Mr. Streit has to face. The will for federation in any of these governments is more than doubtful—even if presently they have their backs to the wall. They will all fight for their separate sovereignty to the last.

No doubt it is true that, in spite of much human inconsistency, much confused thinking and many local abuses, there is still a powerful disposition throughout all the Atlantic and Scandinavian communities towards liberty, equality and world brotherhood. It breaks out in literature, discussion and conduct. It expresses itself plainly in books, spontaneous press writing, plays and films. This is most manifest in America and there is in consequence a growing disposition of the British authorities to intercept and censor the too outspoken American weekly press. An increasing number of English readers subscribe to American periodicals to learn what is being hushed up in their own country.

With every acceleration of communications this American

## WHAT MAN HAS TO LEARN

another war for the alteration or preservation of frontiers. They make only the vaguest allusions to any broader ideas.

It is almost impossible to hope that this complex of warfare in which the world is now involved can assume any other form than a confused alliance against these more lawless military powers, whatever formal victories or defeats ensue. It is incredible that there will not be a steady deterioration in human morale through the stresses of the struggle. If the so-called aggressor states are defeated, their unfortunate common people will be saddled with the war guilt of the governments that have enslaved and ruined them. They will be made to "pay" again. Another insincere attempt to organise "collective security" on the lines of the League of Nations, another unstable League of victors, will simply accumulate the necessary resentments for another collapse into still more violent conflict. Fresh brigand adventurers will appear, not necessarily in Germany, trading on the shame and despair of the vanquished.

It is this that makes this second world-war storm so black. Whichever side emerges at any particular phase as victorious is really a secondary issue. The practical loss of freedom, the usurpation of controls, seems inevitable. The possibility of an emergence of any sort of enhancement of democracy from the threatened *mêlée* remains doubtful. Democracy is still too incomplete, unorganised and unprepared to bring about any such happy ending. Catastrophe is still steadily outrunning education.

### § 8

## WHAT MAN HAS TO LEARN

IF WE HOLD FIRMLY to that same systematic assembling of universally acceptable statements which has brought us thus far, it is not overwhelmingly difficult to state the nature of the mental adaptation that is needed to arrest this present catastrophic rush towards biological disaster for *Homo sapiens*. If it has become necessary for him to be re-educated as a conscious world citizen, to be prepared to take his place in a collective world fellowship, then plainly the realisation of this necessity is the framework upon which his social being must be rebuilt.

## SAMPLE OF A GENERATION

It is only now, indeed, as I bring all these things together to review, that I realise how our attitude to past and future has changed since the later-Victorian period. There has been an almost complete reorientation, at once profound and subtle, of our minds with regard to time.

Briefly: the intelligence of the nineties attached much more importance to the past and much less to the probabilities of the days to come than do any contemporary minds now. It was living in what appears now as an almost static present. The past supplied a picturesque system of justifications for the established state of affairs, but it was the established state of affairs alone which had any quality of reality. There was a widespread feeling that nothing more of primary importance was ever likely to happen. Life as we knew it was a leisurely game of consequences. It is difficult now, even for those of us who were already living in those days, to recall the entire absence of *urgency* that prevailed. We were carried along by habit and that false sense of security which the absence of fundamental crises engenders. To most of my generation in the eighties and nineties all the cardinal discoveries of science seemed to have been made, all the great political systems established for good, the world permanently apportioned among the Powers. We had a sort of feeling that Queen Victoria, under whose rule everybody up to high middle age had been born, would go on living for ever. The future was something in another universe, in another dimension. One could say or think anything one liked about it because it did not seem to matter in the least.

This habit of mind lingered long after the beliefs on which it had been established had decayed. It lingers still.

One factor in the steadily accelerated swing from traditionalism to futurism, that presently began, was certainly the enlargement of our horizons by the realisation of evolution and geological time and the breaking of the barriers set to our imaginations by the myth of the Creation and the Fall. But at first there was—how can one put it?—an intellectual but not a practical release. It was still possible in *The Time Machine* to imagine humanity on the verge of extinction and differentiated into two decadent species, the Eloi and the Morlocks, without the slightest reflection upon everyday life. Quite a lot of people thought that idea was very clever in its sphere, very clever indeed, and no one minded in the least. It seemed to have no sort of re-

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lation whatever to normal existence.

To a large extent I shared that detachment. If I was imaginatively futurist I was for all practical purposes contemporaneous. The possible extinction of humanity appeared to be something so remote that it never gave me a moment's real uneasiness in those days. The future was still no more real than dreamland.

But all that has changed, and I have come through the phases of that change. Now the questions "What is going to happen?" and "And then what will happen?" dominate an increasing number of awakening minds among which I am moving. We live in a planning world. Everything we do is becoming preparatory and anticipatory. To-day has vanished almost completely in our enormous preoccupation with to-morrow.

I suppose I have responded as much as anyone in my generation to this mental rotation. There is no need therefore for me to apologise for using myself as the trace of the flow of thought during the past half century. I happen to be the most convenient trace. If I were not so, then somebody else should be writing this book instead of me.

To begin with I used the future as a field for purely imaginative play. After *The Time Machine* I wrote some more futuristic stories. But as one followed another I found I was less and less interested in the artistic business of making the tale plausible and more and more in the scientific interest of making it probable. The turn of the century set many of us forecasting in earnest. My natural bias or my journalistic instinct, or maybe both in unison, moved me to write *Anticipations* (1900), in which I threw the teller of fantastic tales aside altogether and set myself speculating about the coming years. I was moving with the times. The book caught on; it was more successful than most novels; it was one of the first of such books to sell well. I will not say anything of its guesses, some happy, some wildly out. But it left me with the persuasion that here was something needing to be done and which could be done much more thoroughly than I had done it. My sense of the importance and reality of the future increased.

In 1902 I was reading a paper to the Royal Institution, *The Discovery of the Future*, in which I was boldly asserting the need to realise and accept a forward-looking system of values. I presently found myself in correspondence with various parallel

## SAMPLE OF A GENERATION

groups abroad which, half in defiance and half in burlesque, were proclaiming the Futurist doctrine. Among them was Signor Marinetti, who came to London reciting, in a tremendous voice, the most astounding Futurist poetry. He resented with extreme bitterness the English and American tourists in Italy with their red guide-books like catalogues at a sale. He was, he said, prepared to destroy all the historical monuments in the peninsula. He demanded, loudly and violently, a living country and not a museum of antiques.

The impulse spread, but still for a great number even of progressive-minded people it retained a quality of unreality. It was an exuberance for them, a lark, a fashion. This Futurist stuff, they felt, could not last. In practice they still clung to the established order for their permanent values. It was the shock and stresses of the Great War that wrenched them away finally from this assumption of permanent stability towards a reluctant, imperfect recognition of the greater importance of the anticipatory aspect of life. It was like the internal change-over that must happen in a bar of iron when it is magnetised. And many quite intelligent people were not wrenched away. They kept up their resistances, and a large body of the educated still resist—as we shall see. But the forward-looking section accumulated conviction; their sense of reality continued to shift away more and more decisively from the thing that is to the thing that is to be. *The Discovery of the Future* became by degrees a matter-of-fact statement for me instead of a daring thesis. I believed in it as time went on much more than I had done when first I launched it.

As the first world war unfolded my mind was increasingly obsessed by the problem of how the war would end and what would come after the war. Imaginative people were guessing and inferring and making plans. The word "plan" became more and more frequent; at length no newspaper was complete without it. A Ministry of Foresight was suggested. We busied ourselves in making the New Map of Europe, the New Map of the World. The idea of a "League of Nations" emerged amidst this ferment of anticipatory projects. An interesting phase in all this forward-looking peering was the War Aims controversy. I happened to be working in Northcliffe's Ministry of Propaganda in Enemy Countries,<sup>1</sup> I was in parti-

<sup>1</sup> See *Secrets of Crewe House* by Sir Campbell Stuart.

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cular directing the propaganda in Germany, and, in co-operation with Dr. J. W. Headlam-Morley, I induced our Crewe House colleagues to draw up a memorandum upon the allied war aims and submit it to the Foreign Office for endorsement. "This", we said, "is what we suppose we are fighting for, and if we can get this we shall be satisfied and the war will be at an end. Is that so? We cannot go on with our work properly unless we know its objective." The War Office was profoundly shocked. Whatever else in the world had been affected by the rotation of the human mind towards the future, the Foreign Office has remained immune. There, at any rate, war was what it always had been. You fought your way to your enemy's capital and you then "dictated terms". The objective of a war was victory. To reveal your terms beforehand was not done. So the Foreign Office never committed itself to a binding endorsement of our War Aims Memorandum, and it never warned us of various secret understandings that affected it. It remained in the self-satisfying pose of a superior body tolerating us and using us according to the best diplomatic traditions. And at length at Versailles the terms were dictated.

Until the German capitulation we went on with our development of the League of Nations movement, committing ourselves to very definite promises to the German people in the hope that our engagements would be honoured at the Peace. They were not honoured. We had taken the utmost pains in our propaganda to distinguish between the German people and the Hohenzollern government, and to hold out hopes of a speedy return to the fellowship of nations and a reasonable prospect of recuperation to a chastened and republican Germany. The victorious Foreign Offices treated all that as new-fangled rubbish. The Quai d'Orsay in particular seemed obsessed with a dream of obliterating Germany, of dividing it up so that it would never reassemble itself. They continued to kick Germany about until Germany became frantic with shame and hate, until Germany passed from reason to screaming fury. Its screaming fury found its incarnation at last in Hitler. He did not hesitate at the thought of war. He demanded war. He did not hesitate at the possibility of a subsequent social revolution. The victors of Versailles found Red Revolution even more terrifying than flaming war, and he played upon that terror. They passed from arrogance to propitiatory terror.

## SAMPLE OF A GENERATION

This madman, they felt, might do anything. History became an attempt to humour and appease a lunatic who after all—and that was the worst of it for them—was not always quite so mad as he seemed.

All that is now quite familiar to everyone. What concerns us more directly here are those meetings and movements and discussions that occurred when the idea of the League of Nations was being shaped. These deliberations brought home to me the confused divergence of historical preoccupations among those taking part in them. Their minds were full of broken scraps of history, irrational political prejudices, impossible analogies. Everyone saw the idea from a different angle and seemed prepared to realise it by the hastiest of compromises. *The Outline of History* was the direct outcome of the experience I gathered in these discussions. At first, in conjunction with L. S. Woolf<sup>1</sup> and one or two others, I tried to organise a Research Committee, which would set itself to think out the full significance and possibilities of this great idea. We made William Archer, who was badly out of a job just then, the salaried secretary of this body. With much internal friction we compiled *The Idea of a League of Nations, Prolegomena to the Study of World Organisation*, and *The Way to the League of Nations: A Brief Sketch of the Practical Steps needed for the Formation of a League*. These booklets are still available for the collector. Then President Wilson came to Europe and we were swept aside, because he had his own ideas, and very crude ideas they were, of a League that would make the world safe for democracy. But the difficulty of producing these two reports opened my eyes to the enormous obstacles in the way of all volunteered co-operation. It seemed impossible to hold a team together. They differed upon endless points and they would not come together to hammer them out. They were all too intent upon what they considered more immediately important things. Our chief financial supporter deserted us to go off wool-gathering upon his own lines.<sup>2</sup> He could not see what need there was for all this highbrow research. But we were all going off upon our own lines. We had already disintegrated before we were disregarded.

At a conference with some representative Americans held

<sup>1</sup> Author of an excellent book, *International Government* (1916)

<sup>2</sup> See Note 9A expanding this.



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at the Reform Club in 1918, I pointed out the urgent need for a general history of mankind which would consolidate people's ideas about the establishment of some sort of World Pax. Everyone thought it was a good idea. But here again was something which was nobody's business in particular. There was no time to go about collecting, persuading and editing the academically right people. One might as well have asked Lord Acton to write something. An Outline of History had to be done soon, even if it had to be flung together—and, getting help wherever I could find it, I flung one together.

I did it as well as I could, I worked enormously, and the strenuous hostile criticism to which it has since been subjected has revealed hardly any serious errors of statement. But a lot of it was headlong writing. It seemed to me at the time that if I and a few people could show that there was a shape to history, then it would be easy, since there is no copyright in the past, for the professional historians to rectify any serious flaws and do it better. They did nothing of the sort, and, failing that better performance, *The Outline of History* was launched upon a world conspicuously in need of just that assemblage of information. It had a fantastic success. Millions of copies have been sold and it has been translated into practically every important language in the world—except Italian. Fascist Italy could not tolerate the candid criticism of the Roman Empire.

I was probably rather excited by this astonishing boom. I do not know about that because I was not watching myself very closely. But I think that even at the time I did realise that this immense sale was no tribute to my authorship. It was something much more significant. It was the revelation of a world-wide hunger for adequately summarised knowledge on the part of multitudes whom the schools had sent empty away.

It seemed to me that this aching void probably extended far beyond the field of history. I knew that the general public throughout the world was being kept in the blackest ignorance of modern biological knowledge, evolutionary thought, modern ideas about individuality and modern psychology. I have already told in the Introduction how I realised that in my own case. With the assistance of Dr. Julian Huxley and my son, G. P. Wells, I produced a far more competent companion volume to *The Outline of History*, *The Science of Life*. It is fuller and more searching and better done than its predecessor.

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but its success was by no means astronomical.

Then I turned to the most difficult and original of all these encyclopædic essays, *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind*. This was an attempt to rescue social, economic and monetary "science" from the medieval scholasticism, the theorising unworldliness, in which it still wanders. It was also an attempt to get behind the arbitrary assumptions upon which the Marxist doctrine of a necessary class war is based. Instead of jumping into the matter in the accepted academic style from some crudely plausible assumption, I approached these questions as a special branch of human ecology, and opened the matter out from a realistic survey of human life as a going concern. I began with a survey of the substances and power in the service of man, and thence I pursued a series of interrogations, How? and Why? up to government and education.

It was a laborious task; I chose some unsuitable collaborators from whom I had to disentangle the enterprise with considerable expense and difficulty; but in the end I managed to get every section of it "vetted" by authorities of the first rank. It is sound and tested matter.

In the end the book failed to earn the attention I think it deserved. The title may have been unpromising to the ordinary reader, the manner of its marketing unsuitable. It might have had better fortune as *An Outline of Social and Economic Knowledge*. I am convinced there is as great a public ready for a summary of facts and ideas upon social, political and monetary matters as there is for historical and biological digests. The book did not get to them. The world of economists and so forth ignored it completely—but then it is their practice also to ignore one another completely, to ignore almost everything completely. I find a sort of recognition of it in Barbara Wootton's brilliant *Lament for Economics* (1938), for which I am discouraged enough to be grateful. She is not biologically trained, she is probably quite ignorant of general ecology, but her realisation that economics has still to become a science and can only become a science by admitting the descriptive treatment and examination of actual things and processes, is perfectly clear.

One other book I must mention here. *The Salvaging of Civilisation* was written originally to be delivered as lectures in America, a project frustrated by a bout of influenza. Therein,

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a time to have done with sketches and samples. There is a quantitative element in real affairs. Doing something does not amount to very much unless you do enough.

The achievement of the French Encyclopædists has always appealed very strongly to my imagination. Diderot and his associates had scented the onset of change; they had set themselves, in the measure of their times, to prepare and equip the ideology of the new world they anticipated. They worked against great difficulties and within hampering limitations, but they did produce a new, inspiring conception of a world renewed. They gave a definite form and direction to the confused and powerful liberal impulses of their time. Their assembled thought materialised in the American and French revolutions and in a great heartening of the creative spirit of man throughout the whole world. They lived in an age of comparatively small things. The public capable of understanding and transmitting their ideas was a limited one. But it became very clear to me that what was needed in the face of the oncoming challenges of our time was essentially a new Encyclopædism commensurate with the relative vastness of our new occasions.

I set myself to the development of this idea of a modern Encyclopædism which should assemble facts and suggestions with the same insistence upon scientific reality and the same exclusion of irrelevances that has controlled the establishment of the world outlook I have put before the reader.

In a small book, *World Brain* (1938), the reader will find the substance of my proposals stated more fully and explicitly than is convenient here. I would be glad if the reader could find time to get and read it. I have made a sort of campaign for this new Encyclopædism and I continue to work for it to the best of my ability. *World Brain* is a book quite bold and uncompromising in substance, but still with a distinctly propitiatory manner. It makes clear and definite proposals for a world-wide reconstruction of what we call higher education. What I call the permanent World Encyclopædia is projected as a permanent institution, a mighty super-university, holding together, utilising and dominating all the teaching and research organisations at present in existence. This is shown to be not only a plausible and practical idea, but an idea already finding a material embodiment in part and detail, through the common-

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sense needs of the scientific and technical world. A permanent World Encyclopædia, as I show in that book, is indeed crystallising into existence, but at a pace altogether too slow for the urgency of the human situation. Bound up with this in the same book is a frank survey of what the citizen of a modern democratic world should know—that is to say, a scheme for an adequate modern education. This survey constituted my address as President of the Education Section of the British Association at Nottingham in 1937. It is much more provocative in its manner than the Royal Institution lecture of which it forms the complement. It completely excluded both the Bible mythology and national and imperial history from the educational scheme.

Throughout 1937 I was doing what I could to promote this new Encyclopædism I had in mind, but with very little effect, and in the autumn I went to America and lectured, as *World Brain* relates. There is no need to recapitulate that American discourse here, but what is very apparent to me as I re-read the book is the sacrifice of intensity in the effort to make it interesting and attractive. I am trying out ways and means in a very discursive spirit. I attempt some disarming jests. I write as though there was still quite sufficient time in hand to bring about the new mental orientation. I still had that feeling. Taking myself as a fair sample of the more progressive thought of my time, it is plain that up to the publication of *World Brain* in the spring of 1938 we were still not fully aware of the nearness to a culminating crisis in human affairs.

That forced itself upon our attention in spite of ourselves. We were compelled by the rush of circumstances to realise not only the unqualified soundness, but also, what is by no means the same thing, the urgent and fundamental importance of our intellectual convictions.

In the summer I was invited to be the guest of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science at Canberra, and this involved giving an hour's discourse. I was becoming more and more impatient with the failure of the new encyclopædia idea to secure any energetic support, and also I was growing more and more impatient with my own personal ineffectiveness in the matter. I determined to use this invitation to assert still more plainly and clearly—to myself among other hearers—the case for a new encyclopædia and a radical revision of the world's educational organisation. In

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Canberra I gave this address the title of *The Role of English in the development of the World Mind*, for reasons I have set out in a note at the end of this book.<sup>1</sup> I repeated this lecture with some slight modifications as a public lecture in Sydney Town Hall, under the title of *The Human Outlook*. Substantially this book is an expansion of that address. Its line of thought is the same; its conclusions are the same. It is fuller, much more explicit and more closely reasoned, and its application to current affairs is closer and, to my mind, inescapable.

In addition I volunteered to read another paper to the Education Section at Canberra. I called it *A Provocative Paper on the Poison called History*. This also was made into a very largely attended public lecture, at which debate would have been impossible. It was an hour's show. As I wanted to bring whatever opposition there might be to my thesis into the light of clear statement, I suggested that the Education Section should provide time for its discussion.

The reception of these lectures and addresses was very typical of the transitional state of mind in which we are all living, even the most enlightened of us. They were, you must take my word for it, vividly successful. They were delivered in a setting of compliments and applause. I had been stimulating, amazingly stimulating. I had said things that had long needed saying. I had given them all food for thought of the most invigorating kind. Distinguished men of science came to thank me earnestly for the plainness of my statements. And so on.

And then everything went on just as it had been going on before. The stimulant seemed to evaporate at once and the food was certainly not assimilated.

The Right Honourable William Hughes, that distinguished Australian statesman, had very kindly consented to preside over my Town Hall lecture and at the end of it he expressed his appreciation. "God save us all", he said, and then advancing to the front of the platform, he led the audience with the singing of "God Save the King". Everybody stiffened up to attention. I had been stating as lucidly as I could the reasons for believing that the human species was already staggering past the zenith of its ascendancy and on its way through a succession of disasters to extinction. And then we shook off the disagreeable vision, and lifted up our voices in simple loyalty to things as they are.

<sup>1</sup> For the advantages of English see Note 9c.

The discussion of that "provocative paper" by the Education Section was still more remarkable. I had denounced the teaching of the Judæo-Christian mythology as historical fact in the most emphatic terms. Not a single Christian teacher appeared to reply to that challenge. Most of them, including the masters in one or two progressive schools who had been most anxious to turn my publicity value to account, contrived to have a parallel conference with another Section. In place of a discussion upon the crucial points I had sharpened, we had a series of brief, disconnected addresses by various educational officials, public characters and thoughtful people, about education in general, speaking in an elevated and discursive spirit, making many admirable but irrelevant philosophical remarks and including much autobiographical material. The avoidance of the essential issue was complete. And it was quite deliberate. The discussion was over and nothing had come of it and things were still very agreeable as they always had been. Tea was served.

Now these were not consciously backward people. They knew indeed that they were the *élite* of Australasian progress. These Associations for the Advancement of Science throughout the world, the British, the American and the Australasian, are essentially assemblies of well-informed and liberal and progressive minds. But the real world of our Conference was still this wholly present world in which there are parents to consider, promotion to consider, dismissals, retirements, a world of knighthoods and honours. I went away pondering these things. Presently—let me confess it, lest I seem to claim to be anything better than a sample of a generation—I found myself discussing rather keenly the terms upon which I would lecture in Sydney.

Plainly we are not moving fast enough. We are still balancing in this strange phase of indecision between the actual present and the inevitable future. Even what we may call the more advanced intelligences vacillate and fail to sustain their constructive faith. The established, habitual present remains their real world. These may be profoundly disturbed—intellectually. They may be greatly unsettled and alarmed by the ever-increasing uncertainty of life, but still, in the exact sense of the word "realise", they fail to realise the urgent, implacable future. As the legendary gentleman who sat over his drink in the bar of the sinking *Titanic* remarked: "Well, anyhow,

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the dam thing hasn't gone down *yet*".

... They are all continually relapsing towards acceptance of the prevalent contemporaneous outlook because that is what is most natural in the normal human make-up. At any sign of respite they yield to it. Alertness to the future, we have to realise, is a novel and artificial thing in life. It has to be constantly refreshed and sustained. Minds must be trained and accustomed to it; it is a matter of social atmosphere much more than individual intelligence. They have to be held up to it by something stronger and more permanent than themselves.

It is only in such an educational organisation as I have been deducing from our present needs and, I hope, forecasting here, in such a permanent organisation of knowledge, systematically assembled, continually extended and renewed and made freely and easily accessible to everyone, that there is the slightest hope of our species meeting the serried challenges of destiny that advance upon it. It is impossible to be steadily futuristic, solo, without a sustaining social organisation which will give as assured and habitual a quality to the forward orientation of the everyday life as is now possessed by the unprogressive world of to-day.

And that organisation fails to materialise.

I am impatient and at the same time I do not know how to accelerate matters. I do not think this is simply a case of the distress of an old man in a hurry. There is every justification for hurry in the world about us. I think that however young and hopeful I might be, I should still be intensely impatient to see this movement for human re-education quickened and implemented.

This reconditioning and reorientation of the human mind has to be undertaken not merely against the innate resistances to changing conditions in everyone's make up. These innate resistances are organised very powerfully and effectively, and the nature of their organisation is one we have now to examine. And also we are working against time. It is this time factor that casts the darkest shadow upon the possibility of a single, clear-headed, creative, happily interested, war-free human community emerging from the returning chaos of the present to dominate our planet through long ages still to come.

Years ago I threw out a sentence that caught the attention of that very great and lucid historian, James Harvey Robinson.

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He picked it up and repeated and commended it and gave it a wide publicity. The outlook for mankind, I had written—I think in *The Salvaging of Civilisation*—is “a race between education and catastrophe.”

To-day catastrophe is well on its way, it is losing no time at all, but education seems still unable to get started, has indeed not even readjusted itself to start. The race may, after all, prove a walk-over for disaster.

### § 10

#### ESTIMATING HOPE

HERE A PERSONAL FACTOR comes in, which, I think, should be explained to the reader.

We are now in a field of thought from which it is impossible to banish a temperamental estimate of values. I find a certain defeatism has invaded my mind in the course of the past year. I anticipate very little happiness in the residue of my life. I feel that the odds are very heavily against any such educational revolution being even attempted in my lifetime—there will be no Pisgah glimpse of the promised world for me—and that in all probability my last years will be passed in a very ugly and distressful phase of human history. In many quarters I am unlikely to be a *persona grata*. A spell of ill-health, involving bodily discomfort and a considerable ebb of mental resilience, is contributing to this depression. These are my circumstances.

That matter of health is comparatively a minor issue. But quite apart from any bodily depression, the spectacle of evil in the world during the past half-dozen years—the wanton destruction of homes, the ruthless hounding of decent folk into exile, the bombings of open cities, the cold-blooded massacres and mutilations of children and defenceless gentle people, the rapes and filthy humiliations and, above all, the return of deliberate and organised torture, mental torment and fear, to a world from which such things had seemed wellnigh banished—has come near to breaking my spirit altogether.

Said an old friend of mine the other day: “If only we



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could get away from events for a spell! If only we could get together as we used to get together and laugh!"

Children still laugh. Laughter is born again in each generation. What is past is over and done with for those who did not share in it. Life begins again incessantly. The sequence of birth and death is a continuing amnesty, but for my generation there have been things so unforgettable and disappointments so bitter that for us laughter has become almost a brutality. The dead past is dead—but not for us. We have been too near it and we are splashed with blood.<sup>1</sup>

It is well to remind the reader that though all that follows is written as objectively and truly as I can, it is overshadowed by these misadventures of my generation and mental type. The younger the reader is the more he or she should be able to discount the discouragement of our shadows.

And a consideration he must bear in mind in weighing what I am putting before him is the probability that there is a kind of egotistical intolerance in every definitely elderly mind. That is almost inevitable. Through a long life a complex system of ideas is built up upon a framework of concepts and associations determined by early circumstances. One qualifies, modifies, extends, superimposes significance upon this primary structure, but after a time it becomes irreplaceable. It may not be the best possible foundation, but the more it has to carry, the less it can be changed. It is like a business that has grown up in reasonably convenient premises, they might be better laid out perhaps, but there is no possibility now of completely revising the lay-out. The going concern must carry on. But it becomes more and more difficult to rephrase one's ideas or to recognise them when they are rephrased. So that I may be much less alone and outstanding than I am disposed to think.

The nearer my beliefs are to reality the more probable it is that similar minds may be travelling along parallel, if not identical, lines of thought to practically the same conclusions, approached perhaps from a different starting-point and so differently phrased. I suspect and indeed I hope that I do not allow fully for that.

For example, there is the peculiar dialect of so many minds in the war generation who resorted to Communism and the Communist Party to express their recoil from the existing state

<sup>1</sup> See Note 10A for a schoolgirl's reaction to A.R.P.

of affairs. It was the handiest formula for any sort of organised dissent. Many of them—not all, alas!—are emerging to a broader conception of what can be done with life, but they still speak with a strong Marxist accent. Some few, and my friend J. B. S. Haldane is among their number, seem to be resolved like Lenin (but without the justification of his circumstances) to read a wisdom and profundity into the sage of Highgate which was certainly not there. His Haldane Memorial Lecture (Birkbeck College, May 24th, 1938) was, to my mind, a brilliant yet obstinately perverse overvaluation of the role of Marx (and Engels) in human thought, which may well have made the worthy uncle whom he was commemorating turn in his grave. Lord Haldane also professed the Hegelian faith and that was his nephew's justification. This lecture made the most of Marx, I insist, and more also. And then more.

Now I have always had a peculiar contempt and dislike for the mind and character of Karl Marx, a contempt and dislike that have deepened with the years. I have given it the liveliest expression I could contrive in "The Shaving of Karl Marx" in *Russia in the Shadows* and in the "Psycho-analysis of Karl Marx" in *The World of William Clissold*. My only regret for these brief essays is that I could not infuse more sting and challenge into them. I have watched the tradition of Marxian bad manners and Marxian dogmatism wrapping like a blanket of fog round the minds of two crucial generations. They seemed to me to be lost in the fog. It was difficult for me to think they could be advancing under that fog.

Yet when, for example, I turn over such a book as *The Social Function of Science* by that very considerable writer, Professor J. D. Bernal, F.R.S., I get at times, in spite of his very distinct Marxist twang, a curious sense of parallelism and co-operation. And much that J. B. S. Haldane said in his lecture, I find as I read it over again, I could subscribe to, except that I reject the Marxist attribution.

I am reminded of the story of an Englishman who had a more or less rudimentary cultural conversation with a Japanese gentleman. The latter broke into an oration, a gabble, a flow of unfamiliar sounds which sounded like no known human speech. Then something clicked over in the hearer's mind. He made some rapid transpositions and light broke upon him. He was hearing one of the most familiar of Shakespeare's

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speeches in English! English of a different tint.

I have been asserting, in a phraseology that no doubt owes much more than I realise to the phrases and assumptions of the liberal, protestant, progressive world of half a century ago, a view of the human outlook that seems to me to be irresistibly convincing if one accepts a known series of facts. The truer and more inevitable that view is, the more probable it is that intelligent men, starting from all sorts of different standpoints, will converge upon the same conclusions. In English of a different tint. Indeed, it will be the completest disproof of my contentions, if there is not that convergence, if my conclusions do not reappear independently, crop up from a variety of starting-points and yet work out towards practically the same pattern. If the compelling facts do, as I assert, lie plainly on the face of things, that must be so. But probably, because I have a phraseology of my own, I shall be among those least able to recognise it.

And another thing that anyone who has spent most of his mental energy in trying to give the fullest and most emphatic expression to the truth as he perceives it, may easily underrate, is the tacit insubordination of many of the suppressed and formally silenced minds who are apparently disciplined against us. It is well to recall that all that outbreak of liberal questioning, the Protestant Reformation, which did so much to prepare the way for the French Revolution, was due almost entirely to the mental insurrection of friars or priests. They had had to take their creeds seriously, and they had brooded over their dogmas until they found them unbearable. There was no effective attack from without upon Church teaching throughout the whole Reformation period. There were close at hand, in the alien disbeliefs of Jew and Moslem, a tacit denial of the Catholic faith, but these provoked no reforming zeal. All that came from within. And conversely the Jesuit Counter-Reformation was the work of a group of romantic-minded laymen led by a court-bred gallant who had been wounded and crossed in love. The seven founders of the Society of Jesus were with one exception laymen. They were excited outsiders. They believed crudely and without qualification. They had had none of that intimate instruction of the mind from which questionings arise. They were, so to speak, the Nazis of Roman Catholicism.

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But that is a passing comment. The more relevant point is the indisputable, obstinate tendency of commonsense to assert itself in minds deliberately trained in any elaborate system of intolerance and error. Fanatics are madmen who find a masochist pleasure in strangling their own doubts, there is no dealing with them; but wherever there is discussion and mental training there lurks in every organised dogmatism a class of potential rebels. Hidden allies and half-hearted antagonists may be waiting to come over to a movement for the radical reconstruction of human ideology as it gathers strength. They are, so to speak, among the undisclosed reserves of progress.

Moreover, in further mitigation of my defeatist mood, it has to be borne in mind that while there is still life in a species no biological defeat is complete. Men and women of my type of mind and my generation, however the odds work against us, have no alternative to a stoical persistence in our convictions until our courses are run. We may have to admit regretfully a loss of buoyancy and of the ability for flexible mental co-operations. That is our private affair. In that we are just as much war casualties as those who may have suffered physical disablement in battle but are not yet completely incapacitated. Our injuries narrow down the scope of our service, but they furnish no justification for abandoning a loyal participation in the struggle. Our cause may still be winning.

Finally, as to the urgency of all this, let it be remembered that nothing is more difficult than estimating possibilities in time, and that timing here is a factor of primary importance. Disaster seems to me to be advancing upon us, but it may be that I am overlooking or underestimating the possibility of some intercalary slowing-down in the pace of change. I may be failing to perceive possible delaying forces. Some unexpected development of anti-aircraft technique might, for example, greatly minimise the destructiveness of air raids and the possibility of surprise wars.<sup>1</sup> The world may be held back from disaster for a time by the very weight and strain of its own armaments. It may be false to assume that sooner or later guns will go off of their own accord. Guns can rust and explosives disintegrate. A balance of power may be possible for longer years than I suppose, heavy and burthensome years perhaps, but still not years of complete catastrophic collapse.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 10s for such a possibility.

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In that pause many people will be thinking hard, and the human intelligence may find methods of discussion and organisation unknown to us. I find myself unable to imagine any such respite, and so I cannot bring it honestly into my account—rendered of the world, but there may be such a possibility. That gives no excuse for slackening, but it does justify a certain hopefulness.

With that I think I can finish with myself as a typical sample in evidence in this survey of the reaction of *Homo sapiens* to his present dangers. These ego-centred passages are not really so egotistical as they will seem to be to the antagonistic reader. It is auto-vivisection. I was by far the best and handiest rabbit for this demonstration.

Allowing for my own loss of individual hopefulness and that probable narrowing down of co-operative tolerance in my mind, the conclusions I am presenting to you remain nevertheless sound, grimly sound. The prospect for our species is just as stern and implacable, charged just as much with bracing uncertainty. The issue upon which I am in doubt is not whether I am right or wrong about the facts I have assembled; it is simply whether you of the new generation can be sufficiently braced in time. There, maybe, I do you an injustice. That, no more and no less, is what I am saying.

What I have admitted in qualification of my own ebb of confidence, is no justification whatever for mere optimistic trumpeting—"I believe in the ultimate triumph of civilisation"—and so forth. We have heard so much of that kind of hysteria. Without personal and organised devotion it means less than nothing. It is desertion under cover of a declaration of faith.

There are always plenty of well-meaning people in the world ready to relax at the slightest encouragement, and the surest preparation for disaster is the enervation of sentimental over-confidence. Face your adversary at his worst and most menacing, and then you will know best how to set about him. Rational adaptation, I admit, may be achieved ultimately, but only heroically, at a great cost. The odds are against it, rest assured, if not perhaps so heavily against it as they seemed to be, to me in this particular mood.

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## § 11

### SURVEY OF EXISTING FORCES

WE ARE NOW IN a position to reconsider the nature of the various established systems that block the way to the readjustment of the human species as one single, continually progressive and creative world community, and to make a rough estimate of the way in which they are operating at the present time. We arrive, with minds cleansed and refreshed by our survey of the biological situation, at the political, social and religious realities of to-day.

Legally the world's affairs are in the control of a miscellany of sovereign states, and each embodies itself in a government of politicians and officials, deeply concerned in maintaining the bargaining autonomy of the particular regime which gives them their importance, and prepared to offer a spirited resistance to any invasion, conquest or amalgamation of brave little (or big or old) Ruritania, or whatever state it is. That is how the political map of the world presents things to us. But very few of these legal governments are real cultural entities. It is only one or two sovereignties that embody a complete cultural system of their own. For all practical purposes the British Empire is such a system, with a curiously loose yet persistent will and tradition, sustained by a very distinctive literature of biographies, memoirs, collected letters and speeches and the like, and a quite definite religion—or religious substitutes—the Anglican compromise between Protestant and Catholic Christianity. Still more complete is the Nazi Germany of to-day, which indeed is now strenuously self-sufficient even to the extent of a distinctive science, art, literature, history, clothing, dietary of its own. But most of the other states play their game of international competition over a sort of map which does not necessarily correspond to their spheres of sovereignty. They are like estates, farms and fields spreading over a sub-stratum of soils and geological formations.

It is to these underlying foundation realities of the world situation that we must first direct our attention.

As the facts assembled in *The Outline of History* showed

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very clearly, the expansion in size of the early empires (saving only Egypt with its Nile) was dependent upon two advances in communication, writing and road-making. These expanding empires of the second and first millennia B.C. put a great strain upon the tribal and petty national religions (which in those days included the science and morality) of the smaller states they incorporated. A working compromise was found in a sort of fusion of the absorbing and absorbed cultures. A rejuvenated religion was produced by a mutual modification of ceremony and myth. The corresponding gods of these syncretic religions adopted each other's names as aliases, or they became different "aspects" of a consolidated deity (theocrasia). A general similarity in these more primordial tribal cults greatly facilitated this syncretic process.

About these primordial religions we now have a considerable body of assured knowledge. And this is not—we must underline here—knowledge in dispute. It is not a collection of theories we are bringing into court; it is an assemblage of facts. What we have to cite here is no more questionable than the facts of evolution and ecology that have been assembled in the earlier sections of this book. It is indeed knowledge that is not made accessible to everyone; that is the default of our educational systems; it is steadfastly ignored by many people who find it inconvenient and distasteful; but that does not affect its truth.

We know that these early religions were systems of fear and propitiation, that they centred upon the primary importance of a seasonal blood sacrifice, and that that sacrifice was the function of a priesthood, which was also in charge of the calendar and of whatever medical knowledge existed. From *The Golden Bough* of Sir James George Frazer, O.M., and from *Forerunners and Rivals of Christianity*, by F. Legge (published by the Cambridge University Press), the unbiassed reader can realise for himself how this cannibal blood sacrifice has been refined at last into the Mystery of the Mass, which will indeed have very little mystery left for him if he faces the facts these writers, with no unnecessary emphasis nor any partisan purpose, put plainly before him.<sup>1</sup>

These investigations into the beginnings of religion have accumulated steadily throughout the past half-century. It is

<sup>1</sup> See Note 11A.

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only by great efforts of censorship, by sectarian education of an elaborately protected sort and the like, that ignorance about them is maintained.

These seasonal blood-sacrifice religions had a wide range of local variation, their theogonies differed widely—in some of them, mystical, secret mother-nature goddesses lurked behind the great father god; in others, the totem animal prevailed—but in all their forms they sustained the fear-begotten idea of blood salvation. Two dozen centuries ago they were already suffering through the pressure not only of syncretic necessity but from the increasing scepticism of the awakening human intelligence. They still cumbered the earth with a multitude of temples and priesthoods, for where there is an endowment you can always find someone to be a priest, but they were producing complex developments of their theological explanations.

Ptolemaic Alexandria was a hot-bed of religious elaboration. At the Serapeum, before the middle of the third century B.C., it had produced a trinity with a sacrificial son, who is slain and ascends to the Father and becomes the Father. There were a regular and secular clergy, monks with tonsures, a choral Easter ceremony; and the worship of the Goddess Isis bearing the infant Horus in her arms anticipated the Catholic adoration of the Virgin Mary down even to minor details. The hymn "Sun of my Soul, thou Saviour dear", manifestly is a Christian adaptation of an invocation to the hawk-sun-god Horus. In the temples one saw collections of *ex-votos* hung up in gratitude for miraculous cures and escapes, and the ceremonial purchase and burning of votive candles was encouraged. The hope of a glorious immortality—which was little stressed in the earlier religions outside Egypt—was a central fact in this religious scheme, and so, too, was an insistence upon the material resurrection of the (in Egypt usually pickled) body. All this was going on nearly three centuries before there was a Christian in the world.

But very few Christians know these facts. They are all to be found fully documented in Legge (*op.cit.*).

We must turn now to a second factor in the basis of the cultural life of Europe and the Europeanised world, the Sacred Book.

While religious cults were limited in their range, and appealed at most to a few thousand votaries, it was possible



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to sustain them by direct teaching and initiation, but as greater empires grew with the development of writing and land and sea communications, there appeared a new demand and also a new facility for mental organisation. This was the written word. Spreading over the old sacrificial paganism, there presently appeared what one may distinguish as Book religions. Every great religion in the world to-day, whether it does or does not preserve the tradition of the cannibalistic blood sacrifice, is a Book religion.

The first of the Sacred Books to affect the Western world was the collection of Hebrew writings constituting the core of what is now called the Old Testament. It came into existence as a natural result of the series of misfortunes that happened to the various communities speaking the closely related Semitic languages which had dominated the Western world a thousand years before the Christian era. These were the Babylonian, Phœnician and Carthaginian states, the Jews who had been deported to Babylon and then returned to Palestine, and a variety of trading colonies and settlements in association with these Semitic-speaking centres. In the course of a few centuries these highly civilised and intelligent trading empires and cities, in common with various other old-world communities, collapsed under a series of barbarian raids and conquests coming from the North. Most of these Northern barbarians spoke languages of the Aryan group. Between the Homeric Age and the third century B.C. they had, as the Persians, the Greeks and Macedonians, the Romans and Gauls, become masters of the larger part of the Mediterranean world, leaving the less warlike, Semitic-speaking peoples, *inter alia*, subdued and scattered and defeated but still trading, sustaining a financial network, navigating the seas and going to and fro in the world. They remained in possession of these roles because they knew more about them. The conquerors, as they became civilised, availed themselves, with a certain suspicion and resentment, of these superior gifts and facilities of the defeated. The Semitic business methods were ready-made for the new kings and aristocrats and warriors. They learnt to use them slowly and left them largely in Semitic hands.

During the course of these conquests there was naturally a great intermingling of blood. The subjugated Semitic and pre-Semitic peoples were certainly in the majority in the Latin.

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Greek, Persian and Macedonian empires; history records no general ban upon intermarriage, and we can hardly doubt that the actual blood of the ruling Aryan-speaker was the smaller factor in that continually stirred-up mixture which is now the European and Europeanised world of to-day.<sup>1</sup>

But traditions were less easily assimilated. Throughout that millennium which culminated in the Roman Empire, in all the ports and cities there must have been groups of households and business organisations struggling to maintain a level of refinement and behaviour higher than that of their rulers, and eager also to preserve their business correspondence and a sympathetic understanding with their kindred throughout this new world that had annihilated and discredited their separate religious systems. They needed a Book to unify them, they were ripe for a Book, and the Book was ready for them.

It was in Babylon and Judæa and in the towns of these regions that those Jewish sacred writings first appeared. They contained two overlapping versions of the old Babylonian cosmogony, together with the myths of the Creation, the Serpent-Enemy, the Fall, the Flood and the Tower of Babel. They also contained the story of a Promise and of a Chosen People who were destined to recover all and more than their ancient ascendancy. But at a price. These Chosen People had to keep themselves aloof from the Gentile world. They must preserve their precious distinctive habits and usages intact. They must remain aloof and enduring, until a promised Messiah came to lead Israel to its final triumph over the rest of mankind.

The appeal of these Scriptures to the needs and imaginations of these scattered peoples on the defensive must have been irresistible. In a century or so Carthaginians, Phœnicians, Babylonians disappear from history, and all over the world of their former activities the Jewish communities appear, centring upon the schools of Babylon and Jerusalem with a consolidating literature and a religion. In this stage they proselytised freely. Probably the proselytising was chiefly among kindred and sympathetic Semitic-speakers, but there were also Tartar and other tribes which were won over. The blood-sacrifice tradition was sustained by the priests in the Temple until the fall of Jerusalem to Vespasian in A.D. 70. Then the sacrifices ceased and the Sacred Book with its semi-authoritative

<sup>1</sup> See Note 11B on the racial unity of mankind.

## SURVEY OF EXISTING FORCES

accretions became the link of Jewry throughout the world....

So the first of the great Book religions on which our civilisation rests arose. Hard upon its diffusion followed Christianity, its unidentical twin.

Christianity began as a Jewish sect, as the Books of the New Testament tell very simply and clearly; it was still entirely Jewish after the Crucifixion, and it was only through the initiative of Saint Paul that the ranks of the elect were opened to the uncircumcised. After the Four Gospels, the New Testament is largely occupied with Paul's reconstruction of the Nazarene cult. It is all very plain to anyone who reads these books without theological prepossessions. His brilliant intelligence seized upon the idea of presenting Jesus as the sacrificial king of the blood-sacrifice tradition. Jesus, he declared, was the Lamb by whose blood we were saved—though as a matter of fact crucifixion is hardly a more bloody death than hanging. He had died, said Saint Paul, not only for the Jews but for all men who would accept his sacrifice. This, for the stricter Jews, was an intolerable relaxation of their divine bargain. But some, less profoundly convinced of the Messianic hope, realised the attractive quality of the Pauline teaching.

The medium of diffusion for Christianity remained for a time the scattered Jewish communities. Throughout the first and second centuries Judaism and its offshoot, Christianity, the latter becoming more and more Gentile and anti-Jewish, spread and bickered side by side throughout the whole extent of the Roman Empire. The pagan world, although it was also in a state of great social and religious unrest—the two things seem to be inseparable—had no comparable nexus for the production of alternative sacred writings that could stand up against the dissemination of these Judæo-Christian legends and mythology. So that these latter provided the written factor in the foundations of civilisation throughout the entire Western world.

Later, another Book religion, Islam, swept for a time across the Mediterranean scene, with very considerable reactions upon medieval science and thought. But that influence, and the effects of a vast multitude, myriads indeed, of less distinguished "Sacred Book" cults, are outside our present discussion.

It is necessary to recall these well-known—though persistently neglected—facts here because they established a general statement that what we may call roughly Western culture—the

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mental adaptation of mankind to social and political life, from the Pacific coast westward across the Atlantic to farthest eastern Russia, up to as late as the second Russian Revolution in 1917—was based upon an inter-related system of Bible-centred Book-religions which had either obliterated or assimilated the more ancient blood-sacrifice cults.

Let us now review the chief forms these foundation religions take in our world to-day.

### § 12

## THE JEWISH INFLUENCE

FIRSTLY, BECAUSE OF ITS illuminating quality, we must consider the progressive segregation of the Jewish community. It has diverted, wasted and sterilised an amount of ability and moral energy that mankind at large can ill spare. In the previous section we have shown how naturally it arose out of the state of world affairs of the centuries before and after the Christian era, and how the realistic genius of Saint Paul sought an escape from its perilous limitations. From the very beginning, there must have been men of vision among the Jews who realised and rebelled against the moral isolation to which they were being condemned, there must have been a continual seeping-away of individuals to the larger opportunities of the outer world, but the uncompromising tradition carried by the old Bible and the associated writings which grew into the Talmud has been sufficient to hold together a core of inassimilable and aggressive orthodoxy to this day clinging obstinately to every detail of ritual, behaviour and avoidance that emphasised the central legend of a Chosen People.

It is this orthodox remnant and its behaviour and influence, the repercussions it evokes and the dangers to which it has exposed the whole Jewish community, which constitute the Jewish problem. There would be no distinctive Jewish question at all were it not for this remnant and its activities.

The whole question turns upon the Chosen People idea, which this remnant cherishes and sustains, which it is the "mission" of this remnant to cherish and sustain. It is difficult

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not to regard that idea as a conspiracy against the rest of the world. It is essentially a bad tradition, and the fact that for two thousand years the Jews on the whole have been very roughly treated by the rest of mankind does not make it any the less bad. Almost every community with which the orthodox Jews have come into contact has sooner or later developed and acted upon that conspiracy idea. A careful reading of the Bible does nothing to correct it; there indeed you have the conspiracy plain and clear. It is not simply the defensive conspiracy of a nice harmless people anxious to keep up their dear, quaint old customs that we are dealing with. It is an aggressive and vindictive conspiracy. People are apt to catch up and repeat phrases about the nobility of the Book of Isaiah on the strength of a few chance quotations torn from their context. But let the reader take that book and read it for himself straightforwardly, and note the setting of these fragments. Much of it is ferocious; extraordinarily like the rantings of some Nazi propagandist. The best the poor Gentile can expect is to play the part of a Gibeonite, a hewer of wood and a drawer of water for the restored elect. It is upon that and the like matter that the children of the orthodox have been fed. It is undeniable. There are the books for everyone to read. It is not tolerance but stupidity to shut our eyes to their quality.

It is difficult to imagine how minds brought up under the influence of such teaching can be expected to refrain from preferential and exclusive dealings. Because, since they are born to it, it will seem to any but the more thoughtful among them to be in the nature of things. This, they learn, is how God has ordered the world, and they behave accordingly. They do not feel they are being cunning about it, they feel they are doing right about it. That is the common charge against the practising Jews, and it is brought against them in every locality and in every industry in which they are numerous. And their Sacred Book, with its supplementary accumulation, the Talmud, substantiates these charges and more than accounts for such behaviour.

Every sort of man is disposed to get together with his own sort of people and prefer them to strangers. That is the natural disposition of our species, fair-play to the outsider is one of the last and least assured triumphs of civilisation, but the indictment against the Jewish community is that their religion of a Chosen

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People takes this universal human vice, justifies it and stimulates it to the form of a persistent organised attitude of self-exclusion from the common fellowship of the world.

Everywhere the same reaction occurs and everywhere the Jew expresses his astonishment. Not only Christians but Turks have resorted to pogroms. In contact with the Arab, the Koran-taught Arab from the desert, who shares the Jew's cosmogony, who practises similar dietetic taboos, who is equally free from Trinitarian theology and sacrificial bloodshed, and has indeed a much stronger claim to be called Semitic, the angry reaction to the theory and practice of a Chosen People, to the practice much more than the theory, is just as violent as it is in any other part of the world.

It is this Chosen People tradition, and still more the habit of mind which betrays itself in those who have come under its influence, which is the ever-recurrent cause of the trouble. It seems to me beside the mark to look for any other.<sup>1</sup>

Estimates of the number of Jews in the world vary between fourteen and sixteen million. The latter figure is given by Louis Golding in *The Jewish Problem* and by Lewis Browne in the careful and scholarly work he has entitled so flippantly, *How Odd of God*. ("How odd of God to choose the Jews!" —W. N. Ewer.) This is not a very great total. They have and always have had abundant and well-cared-for families. Probably outside the range of definitely associated Jews, there has always been a much larger world of sympathetic kin, sharing and affected by the feelings of the stricter core, capable of co-operating with it and responding to modifications of the central idea, but gradually slipping away beyond recall.

As we have noted in § 11 (and see also *Note 11b*) most of us probably have a more or less considerable proportion of "Jewish" blood in our veins, using "Jewish" in the larger sense. But orthodox Judaism has always been a narrower and intenser strain. It has passed through phases of leakage and recovery. The Protestant Reformation was a phase of leakage. Browne doubts whether there were half a million Jews in Europe in 1600, "fewer than were to be found in Castile alone four hundred years earlier."

Of the sixteen million Jews to-day, Browne estimates that there cannot be more than four million who are strict adherents.

<sup>1</sup> See *Note 12A* for a further discussion of this point.

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to and observers of the Law and that perhaps another six million are what he calls semi-observant; they are lax about food and drink and the Sabbath, but when it comes to celebrating marriages, funerals, taking an oath and so forth they follow the ancient formulæ, they attend the main annual feasts, they pay their pew rents and do their full duty by the Jewish charities. They are very much like the Anglicans who don't go to Church very much but would never dream of being married in a registry office. Then comes another three million who have become entirely indifferent to the Law. They do not attack it, but they put it aside. Yet they cling as nationalists to the solidarity it has preserved through the ages. They are Reform Jews or Radical Nationalists, like the Law-disregarding young Jews of Palestine. Mr. Browne is himself a Reform Rabbi and he can write incidentally:

"There are certain writers who become tremulously nostalgic and tender when describing the life of those pietist Jews. Ensnared in laurel-embowered English cottages, or seated in cafés on Montparnasse, such writers will wax ecstatic as they discourse on the effulgent 'mysticism' enhaloing the ghetto hovels. But that, I fear, is because they have never entered those hovels. Had they done so they would in all likelihood realise—unless sentimentality had too thickly blurred their sight—that life in them is not bathed in the lambent light of unearthly wisdom: that instead it is dark and scabrous with superstition."

Yet he can still make a case for the Jews holding together against mankind at large, as we shall see.

The remaining three of these sixteen million Jews are rapidly ceasing to be Jews at all. Mostly they are becoming Communists, and he notes with a sort of calm amazement that "a cult which had lasted for centuries could be shattered in a decade." The younger generation has been given equality in the U.S.S.R., excellent schools and a new and exciting creed. Nominally they remain Jews, and their language, Yiddish, is one of the national languages recognised by the Union. But Hebrew has vanished—the Law, the Promise and Jehovah!

And at this point Browne and I part company. Judaism may vanish in Russia under Communism, he has to admit, but it will live on elsewhere not by virtue of its own quality but because of Gentile intolerance. He argues that Gentile intol-

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rance makes the Jews and keeps them together. I argue that the Jews make themselves and that Gentile intolerance is a response to the cult of the Chosen People. To get down to ultimate things, we are in substantial agreement, I find, in that we desire a world enlightened, scientifically administered, free, a world-wide new civilisation open to everyone, where there will be neither Jews nor Gentile bond nor free. Nevertheless we differ diametrically in our interpretation of the root cause of the Jewish problem, and as a consequence upon the question where the tentative for denationalisation should begin. Thirteen million Jews—at least—still make the implacable Gentile the justification for their own persistence. They still hold to that hard core of national separatism in spite of the steady evaporation of every traditional religious justification. Yet they have a world-wide organisation for calling off that attitude and the Gentiles have no corresponding representative network to speak for them to the same extent. The Holy See has recently condemned racialism very clearly and definitely. So has the white House....

But let me go on with what I believe is the truer version of the Jewish story, and the reader, with a glance at the notes at the end whenever he needs confirmation, must judge between me and the defenders of persistent Jewish nationalism.<sup>1</sup>

The hostile reaction to the cult of the Chosen People is spreading about the entire world to-day. In the past the Jews have been subjected to much resentful treatment and much atrocious cruelty and injustice, now here, now there, but there has never been such a world-wide—I will not use the word anti-Semitism because of the Arab—I will say anti-Judaism. Now, because of the physical unification of the world, the resentment against the theory and practice of a Chosen People is much quicker and more contagious than it used to be; it is becoming world-wide and simultaneous. The idea is becoming everywhere more and more intolerable than it has ever been before.

The cultivated, exaggerated, national egotism of the Chosen People has never been so conspicuous as it has been in the present century and particularly since 1918. As their ritualism has weakened their nationalism has increased. I recall a conference that took place in '19 or '20 in a room in

<sup>1</sup> See Note 12B for that fuller discussion.



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the House of Commons. A number of French writers had deputed Madame Madeleine Marx to discuss with various English men and women of letters the possibilities of concerted action and possibly organisation in the cause of world peace and world understanding. In those days Israel Zangwill had adopted the role of Champion of the down-trodden and suffering Jewish race, and more particularly of that section of it which was to be found in the wealthier mansions of West Kensington and Tyburnia, *en route* from the East End to the House of Lords. He sustained its racial pride, if indeed that needed sustaining. He insisted upon Israel's distinction and its inappeasable hunger for restoration to the land of the protracted Promise. He told them of the *Dreamers of the Ghetto*. He reminded them of their origins with humour and emotion. He helped them to feel "different", as the American car salesmen say, and mystically better. They were, he persuaded them, not really having the good time they seemed to be having; behind the brave face they put upon things they were weeping by the waters of Babylon. The true voice of Israel was to be heard not in the West End of London but when it went off for a trip to Palestine and, following the customary routine, wailed at the Wailing Wall. Always he spoke of "My people".

He brought his championship to our deliberations. We various British authors had had our trivial shares in the "war to end war", and we were very willing to fall in with any proposals that would help to rationalise the heated and punitive atmosphere of the Versailles peace. We felt that a peace that would indeed end war was slipping away from us. But we found this conference dominated by the communist dogmatism of Madame Marx, against which Bernard Shaw protested, and Zangwill's preoccupation with his "people". The world's necessity, it seemed, was Israel's opportunity. He laid down the conditions that would satisfy their needs; he insisted on what would satisfy them, what would make them willing to help us, and the difficulties an offended Jewry could create for us. So far as I could grasp his drift he was dealing with us as the British Empire. We were not the British Empire, but it was vain to protest. Zangwill was a very resolute character and that was the drama he had in mind. Just as in our private disputes he would insist on treating me as a devout Christian. Then he could say: "But your Saviour was a Jew!" Useless to

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plead that I was not a Christian, and that there might be considerable prepotency in the Holy Ghost. Zangwill was being the captive nation making his terms with the oppressor. It is the drama so many people still have in mind when discussing this question. Miss Rebecca West has a rough and caustic wit. She is eminently free from racial prejudices but she had listened with a growing impatience to these demands, and suddenly she was inspired to a concentrated expression of our general impatience. "Mr. Chairman", she said, "should I be in order if I moved a pogrom?"

In those days we in the victorious allied countries were all ready to believe that the world was really recovering from the War and entering upon a phase of comparative freedom and hope. We did our best not to think too much about the state of affairs in Germany. Everybody was talking of reconstruction and rationalisation, and it was possible to deal jestingly with things that have now become intolerably grim.

The Zionist movement was the crowning expression of what I, in flat contradiction to Mr. Browne, hold to be the obdurate insistence of orthodox and semi-orthodox Jewry upon their peculiarity. In the years immediately following the War, there was a lull even in the normal persecutions in Eastern Europe to which the orthodox were subjected. They suffered indeed during the civil disorders that preceded the consolidation of the Bolshevik government; Whites, Reds and Greens were alike guilty of pogroms of varying degrees of virulence, and there was in consequence a certain exodus westward, but as the new law and order were established in Russia these outrages ceased and the process of rapid assimilation, to which reference has already been made, began. But already the champions of Judaism were advertising to the whole world how implacably they insisted upon their eternal essential foreignness. They had demanded a national home, so that elsewhere they could be for ever foreigners. They might within limits accept the advantages of citizenship of the country they lived in, but essentially they would not belong. They would vote, hold office, rule, but always with Zion in their hearts. They ignored the manifest fact that the day of small sovereign states is drawing to an end, and that, in a world of ever-growing violence, to plant themselves massively in any particular area was to invite a wholesale disaster.

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To many people of a more flexible disposition, a certain habit of insistence upon the strict letter of a bond, in spite of unforeseen contingencies, is uncongenial. The Bible-trained Jew, one must realise, has had a very legalistic training. Esau made a bad bargain and was held to it. That was the beginning of the Arab trouble. Shylock is how Shakespeare saw this unrelenting trait. The Jews dun Jehovah still, at the Wailing Wall and elsewhere, for a Promise he perpetually evades. And now they are dunning the poor old British government for the bright hopefulness of the Balfour Declaration, irrespective of its other quite contradictory entanglements. They are, the Zionists are, taking no thought for the common dangers and the common welfare of the race. The rest of the world may go hang. In these matters these Zionists are not showing themselves citizens of the world. They are behaving like infuriated creditors. Here are the promise and the declaration, and covenants are the breath of life to them. They express their indignation by rioting, by throwing bombs, and it does not dawn upon them that the Gentile world, which is always being bilked and making the best of it and going off to something else, and which is now in a state of increasing tension and danger, may be very disagreeably affected by this single-minded debt-collecting. They make such a pother about it that it becomes almost impossible to think about the greater issues of the time.

To-day, when the whole world is being subtly pervaded with anti-Jewish feeling, and when the restraints upon the predatory and persecuting impulses in the human animal are being rapidly weakened, these implacable nationalists are still conspicuously seeking suitable regions where they can go on being a people by themselves, where, pursuing an ancient and irrational ritual so far as it suits them, they can sustain a solidarity foreign and uncongenial to all the people about them.

No country wants them on such conditions. Why should any country want these inassimilable aliens bent on preserving their distinctness? Palestine is an object lesson. Until they are prepared to assimilate and abandon the Chosen People idea altogether, their troubles are bound to intensify. No one can help them while even a die-hard minority—a minority that the general body of them does not disavow, a nucleus about which habit and association and sentiment gather very readily and to which it is easy for lost sheep to return—prefers these exasperat-

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ing pretensions of a special right and claim to becoming frankly and of their own accord common citizens of the world.

These are the elementary facts of the quandary to which the Chosen People have come, the more relentless dragging the doubters and half-hearted with them. They are facts that have to be stated, even though matters are now coming to a complexion which gives a flavour of ruthlessness to their bare statement.

In the last two paragraphs of § 5, the essential facts of the present rapid dislocation of social order have been stated. Social disintegration is now a world-wide reality, it is a convulsive breaking-down everywhere of long-established systems of law and order, an almost cataclysmal dissolution. It is a process far vaster than this Jewish question we are discussing and it arises from causes that have no special connection with that trouble. But it catches up the Jewish question in its swirling eddies and spins it about so that its fluctuations become indicative of the character of the entire process.

The Jewish question is already something very different from what it was a score of years ago when Zangwill championed and threw that glamour of racial romance and Maccabean heroism about the ancient ways. Those were tolerant days. At that time it was easy for people to fall away from the old observances if they chose and become Christians or unconforming sceptics. Now, and it is the most ominous aspect of the new phase, in many parts of the world the doors of escape from orthodox Jewry are being closed. These doors are not being closed from the inside; there is no way of closing them from the inside. They are being closed from the outside. Those who are disposed to apostacy are being turned back by the outer world. Nothing of this sort was happening twenty years ago. A number of people, and some of them are very sinister people indeed, are beginning to say, "You insisted upon being Jews. Jews you *shall* be."

The operating causes in those wide alternations between social confidence, a sense of stability and a prevailing lawfulness and tolerance, and phases of insecurity, fear, dishonesty and general unrighteousness, which have manifestly occurred in the human story, have still to receive anything but the most casual attention from the historian. Those happier periods, when the social machine was running smoothly, when men

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were able to move about freely and almost fearlessly, to work with a sense of fair reward, when there was something definite and reasonably satisfactory and hopeful for most of the young men to do, have been by far the less frequent and the least secure. Order and peace have been precarious always in the growing human societies of the last four or five thousand years. There have been constantly recurrent phases of mutual pressure, expansion and that dislocation without which readjustment is impossible. Then doubt and suspicion invade men's minds. They lose that feeling that they are being properly taken care of; there is no confidence that services will be rewarded or debts paid; mutual trust gives way to suspicion. Social behaviour deteriorates. The strong and cunning no longer feel that the weak will be protected. The suspicious look for scapegoats to blame, for evil-doers who have offended the gods, for conspirators. Particularly for conspirators.<sup>1</sup>

We do know and we have already stated in general terms the forces that have produced the particular phase of violent social disintegration that is going on to-day. They are worldwide and unprecedented. Socially they are more destructive than anything our species has ever faced before. The disintegrating changes in the social order of the past were probably due to much more localised and quite different influences: to unrecorded fluctuations in the relative welfare of classes, to the social shifting due to new economic processes, to the influence of groups of bad people in positions of authority, to the infiltration of foreign ideas and practices, to foreign pressure, to epidemics—no history can be complete without a proper study of the social sequelæ of plague, the Black Death and the like—to sustained bad weather, drought for example, over a number of years, to a stimulating and disorganising influx of gold such as happened after the discovery of America. These and a thousand other disturbing forces have been enough to tilt the always unstable and insecure social balance back to general distrust and convulsive, self-protective dishonesty. The adaptive culture fails. Things go to pieces. Man reverts to his more natural state of a fear-and-desire-driven beast.

In the history of any social system such periods of disorganisation display almost parallel phenomena of demoralised mass action. The strong are looking for the weak not only

<sup>1</sup> See Note 12c for *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, etc.

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individually but collectively in order to gratify their craving for power, the crowd is seeking the furtive enemies of the state, the fearful are looking for the strange wickedness and secret mischiefs that have brought about the discomforts of the time. In such an atmosphere any marked kind of people are liable to be set upon, are liable to be ringed about for victimisation and punitive plunder.

Such a convergence of hostility has by no means been confined to the Jews. The Albigenses, for example, in the south of France, had no very special relationship to the Jewish community. They were a Christian sect with certain heretical ideas derived by way of Bulgaria from the Gnostics and Manichæans. They were charged, by their exterminators, to whom we owe most of the knowledge we have of their beliefs, with abnormal sexual practices. What is more certain is that they protested vigorously against the corruptions of the Church and were markedly anti-sacerdotal. They spread throughout Provence and prospered throughout the twelfth century. Their movement was in several respects an anticipation of the Protestant Reformation. Whereupon the Church invoked the harder, ruthless and more Catholic north, and preached a Crusade against them. Moral and religious indignation and the prospect of loot implemented their destruction. Here we cannot tell the tale of massacres, burnings alive—two hundred in one *auto-da-fé*—the sadistic terrorism and blackmail of the Holy Inquisition....

The Armenians again are another much massacred, non-Jewish but distinctive people.

But it is the Jews who have generally been the marked people throughout the realms of Christendom and Islam. They have generally "got it first". And repeatedly the door has been slammed upon Jews who have been seeking to get away or were actually getting away from the threats that darkened over them.

Lewis Browne gives a compact and effective account of the fate of the Marranos in Spain and Portugal. He tells of the forcible baptism and conversion of the Jews in 1391 in the face of a storm of popular hostility. The government, because of their financial and administrative usefulness, opened a door of escape for them. They were given the choice between exile and inassacre or Christianisation. A great majority chose the latter, and since all the synagogues were closed and the practice of

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the Jewish law sedulously suppressed, within three or four generations most of these baptized Jews became just as good or better Catholics than their neighbours. This from the outset was a huge disappointment for those neighbours who had been whetting the knife, so to speak, for an orgy of murder and plunder. It seemed to them the meanest trick conceivable. They called these desperate converts the New Christians or more familiarly swine (=Marranos), and set as rigid a bar as possible on any intercourse with them. As Jews they had been "dogs" but now they were "swine". "Conversion indeed!" they said. "You don't get away with *that*."

In complete good faith the majority of the Marranos in the next generation or so were Catholics. "These hapless creatures", says Browne, "took no pride their past. On the contrary they were through and through ashamed of it and groaned that it be forgotten." That did not help them in the least. Massacre and detailed persecution closed in on them. The tale is fully told in Mr. Cecil Roth's *History of the Marranos*. It is a frightful story, but from the point of view of the present discussion it is almost the same story, Inquisition and all, as that of the Albigenes, who were not Jews at all.

An entirely parallel treatment has been meted out in the last decade to the Christian Jews in Germany. They have been herded back upon their orthodox brethern, in the same spirit and for the same reason that the Marranos were kept apart for destruction. We are witnessing now a swifter and vaster repetition of that Marrano tragedy.

A time has come when a multitude of men and women of more than average intelligence, men and women who in reality have no essential racial difference from the average European, are finding themselves with no foothold whatever upon the earth, dispossessed and hunted from country to country, marooned in impossible regions, deprived of the normal protection of the law, beaten up by anyone who chooses to beat them up, outraged, tortured, sterilised, stripped of everything, ill-treated in every possible way. They seek escape from one country to another, and the countries where they would take refuge, suffering now from the fast-spreading economic and social malaise of this current phase in human history, are more and more chary of receiving them even as assimilable individuals. Everywhere employment is dislocated. Everywhere

they encounter the protest: "We have our own unemployed!"<sup>1</sup>

A great book, a book of victims with thousands of authenticated cases, could be filled already with the tale of forced suicides, murders and abominations done upon these refugees, and there is no reasonable prospect of surcease. From the narrower point of view the compilation might be called *The Jewish Book of Martyrs*, but from another it could be entitled *The Natural Man*, because its broader interest lies in the clear demonstration of what the inherent brute in man can do when the grip of law and order relaxes. It is a horrible recrudescence of primordial human reactions, but that is no reason why we should shut our eyes to the role of the alien nationalism of the Chosen People in exposing them first and foremost before any other people to this accumulating outbreak of hatred, cruelty, bestiality and every sort of human ugliness. They are the first to suffer in the social dissolution of our epoch, because they have stood out most conspicuously. They are the most obvious "murderers" and "plunderers". They come first. But they are only the first....

I have enlarged upon their case because it is not only conspicuously challenging at the present time but because it brings into the picture most of the elements of the present human situation, the general disposition of any established community to adhere to forms and traditions of living long after their survival value has disappeared, the normal blindness of human beings to the onset of novel and more exacting conditions until disaster actually supervenes, the swiftness with which social balance can now be overturned.

I can see no other destiny for orthodox Judaism and those who are involved in its obloquy, unless that enormous effort to reconstruct human mentality for which I have been pleading arrives in time to arrest their march to destruction. That, if it is to save our species, must be a reconstruction so bold and wide, an amnesty so fundamental, that it will sweep the religion of the Chosen People and this age-long feud of Juif and anti-Juif out of the living interests of mankind altogether.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note 12b upon the refugee question.

<sup>2</sup> For a practically identical view vividly expressed, read Wyndham Lewis's *The Jews, are they human?*



## CHRISTENDOM

### § 13

## CHRISTENDOM

FROM THE TRAGEDY OF Judaism we must turn now to Christianity, that second and greater branch of the Bible tradition, which is the basis of contemporary Western civilisation. The word Christianity has covered and still covers an immense variety of idea systems, but to-day it finds its most highly organised and active expression in the Roman Catholic Church. That too is a power transcending national and state boundaries and playing a distinctive part in moulding human thought and destiny to-day.

In certain respects Catholic Christianity is in diametric contrast to Judaism; in certain others the two cults run side by side. They have this in common that nearly everywhere they produce the feeling that they are alien cultures. They are apt to be suppressed by governments together, as in Hanoverian England and Hitlerian Germany, and to be emancipated together. But they differ fundamentally in the fact that while participation in Judaism after the early phase of eager proselytism became for many reasons difficult, Christianity from its beginning with Saint Paul (Acts xi. 26) onward has been a missionary religion, seeking and incorporating converts throughout the whole world.

It not only incorporated converts but it incorporated ideas. It sprang from the Jewish sect of the Nazarenes, but in the course of the three centuries before its forcible stabilisation by Constantine the Great in 325 at the Council of Nicæa and the definitive formulation of its three creeds, the third-century Apostles' Creed, the fourth-century Nicene Creed, so much more explicit about the Trinity, and the Athanasian (of uncertain date and authorship) which finally cleared up the Trinity business for good and all in a drumming storm of intolerant nonsense, it had practically become a synthesis of all the chief religious cults of that mentally festering age.

The Catholic Church emerged from these formative centuries as an organisation of very considerable tenacity, but intellectually it was already the most extraordinary jumble of

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absurdities and incompatibilities that has ever exercised and perplexed the human intelligence. It accumulated accretions like a caddis worm. Still—though now with more deliberation—it assimilates. At a very early stage it developed sexual obsessions unknown to its cognate Judaism. The Virgin Birth began to worry its usually celibate theologians. Jesus on one occasion (Matt. xx. 47–50) had very definitely denied any religious importance to his mother, but with the taking-over of Isis and the Infant Horus, as the Virgin and Child, this was disregarded. The Virgin became a divine queen, very beautiful and adorable. St. Ignatius Loyola, contemptuous of the earthly attractions he had found unsatisfactory, vowed himself her Knight, and believed there was a mutual devotion. That the intenser religious succumb very readily to the suggestions of such phrases as “The Bride of Christ”, one can find ample evidence for in the vast literature of the Christian mystics. It became necessary to sublimate the Virgin, the attractive Queen of Heaven. She had to be made “sinless” and born without “sin”. So the theologians excogitated a “sinless” begetting for her. It is difficult to tell these things without a touch of derision. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception emerged from their meditations. It was mainly a Spanish product, and there is a monument to the Immaculate Conception outside the Alcazar in Seville. It is perfectly decent; it is a grouping of the divines, thinkers and spiritual heroes, grave and dignified figures, who contributed to the perfection of this profound discovery. For centuries, however, this Immaculate Conception was not a matter of faith. It was made so by a Bull of Pope Pius IX as recently as 1854. There was a great assembly of bishops and dignitaries in Rome from all parts of the world, a great gathering of adult men robed very beautifully and carrying themselves very seriously. A happy sense of a great consummation pervaded them. And now all good Catholics must believe in the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, though what it is they think they are believing in I cannot imagine.

And so, century by century, the great fabric of the faith goes on accumulating. It has become a sort of Cumberland Market of religious notions.<sup>1</sup> There is something from everywhere in it and, wherein lies its chief attractiveness, something for everybody. No single mind can cover that mighty mental

<sup>1</sup> For a frank Catholic admission of this, see *Note 13A*.

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jumble sale in its entirety, so that anyone willing to be converted has no difficulty in ignoring the less congenial articles of the collection. You will, for example, find the sternest condemnation of socialism, no Catholic can be a socialist, and then you will find that the author of the completest forecast of communism, commissars and all that, Sir Thomas More, has been canonised as a saint.

The organisation of the Church, with its confessional and its spiritual direction, facilitates this fragmentary approach to faith in every possible way. The convert is invited and trained to help in his own subjugation. He is implored to pray for light. He must bury his sense of humour. These, he is told, are serious matters. A hearty laugh at the metaphors of relationship in the triplex composition of the divinity would shatter the whole process. Derision is the deadly enemy of Catholicism; it drives it to indignant persecution, indignant silence or indignant flight, according to the exigencies of the situation.

Christianity picked up the Holy Trinity, it would seem, in the second century, and very manifestly from Alexandria. By that time Alexandria far more than Jerusalem had become the spiritual home of Christianity. Neither St. Paul or Jesus insisted upon the fundamental importance of right views about the Mystery of the Trinity to their followers. To say the least of it, it was inconsiderate of them to leave it to the author of the Athanasian creed, centuries later, to formulate, in terms of the now long-abandoned metaphysics of Alexandria, "The Catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully he *cannot* be saved.". Did Matthew know? Did Peter understand? It leaves one anxious about the ultimate fate even of St. Paul himself.

Why do intelligent people accept this strange heap of mental corruption as a religion and a rule of life? That question will bring us back to that reorientation of the human mind, and that conflict between the actuality of the present and the accumulating reality of the future, to which I have devoted § 9. They accept it because it is there before them and because it existed long before they did. They grew up to it and even if they were not actually born and bred Catholics, they saw it everywhere taken for granted and treated with respect, cathedrals and shrines, saints and martyrs, in art, in literature, in

history, in the world about them. There is no reasoning in a stained-glass window, but there is an immense amount of conviction. To turn from the menaces of stark reality to established religion is to be immediately reassured. To turn from active, questioning minds to the company of the faithful is inexpressibly comforting. And with that you get prescription and direction for all the main issues of life. The Church, the faithful about one, a vast volume of literature and history, agree in saying: "Don't trouble. You are all right. Do as we do and all will be well." At times I have tried to imagine what such a natural born scoffer and rebel as Mr. Hilaire Belloc, whose mental processes have always interested and distressed me, thinks at Mass. But that is just when he suspends all thinking. *Credo quia absurdum*, I suspect is the note of it, a triumphant revolt against his own intelligence. He became a scoffer and rebel against liberalism and scientific revelation because he resented their compelling convincingness. Any fool, he felt, could believe that.

And it is equally easy to understand the attraction of the Catholic Church to those outside but within the influence of the fold. They are already half converts. They "go over" without the slightest examination of the fundamental absurdities of the faith. Conviction comes after a discussion of the Apostolic Succession and the validity of the Protestant Orders. Such things are deliberated very gravely. With a sense of enhanced importance, the convert takes to fish on Fridays, is received, attends Mass, feels unutterable things. Unutterable even to himself. It is all so tremendously established. Quiescence, spiritual peace ensues. Until the anxiety of the times takes hold of these refugees from fact, they will not recognise the element of malignity in the activities of this great organisation to which they are clinging. Even then they will feel the utmost reluctance in leaving go. It is their last protection against that terrifying readjustment to creative reality, which would make them responsible adults in this world of limitless danger, limitless difficulty and limitless possibility.

Fantastic, defiantly absurd as this vast pile of the Faith becomes to anyone who dares to go into it and question it fearlessly, it is far less fantastic than the actual organisation of the Church. Its central control rests with a close corporation of priests, mainly Italians, the cardinals, who with scarcely a

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break have elected a continuity of Italian Popes for the last three centuries. Spiritually Italians must be a very superior people.

In the Vatican, in entirely unveracious succession to St. Peter, sustained by a handsome subsidy from the Fascist government and the less reliable contributions of the faithful at large, the Holy Father, in the measure of his intelligence and the quality of his advisers, keeps his court and steers the Church through the pitfalls of this world. He has had the medieval education of a priest; his advisers have worn the mental blinkers of the devout, and just as far as they dare, they influence the political life of the world, according to their limitations and prejudices. In all the democracies the "Catholic vote" obeys the tortuous wisdom of these scheming old anachronisms. Here tyrannies are blessed and here revolts are fomented. The devout in France or Britain, for example, must support the Franco pronunciamento to the infinite injury of their own countries.

Joseph McCabe in his *History of the Popes* tells the story of the Papacy with a certain bitter accuracy and an ample citation of authorities. The Catholic reader will, I know, feel that my recommendation of that outspoken book is in the worst possible taste. But let me nevertheless urge it upon his attention. It will trouble his mind, but it will purge it. But if he asks his co-religionists questions about it, they will make him feel as if he were making rude noises.

When we try to estimate the role the Church is now playing in mundane affairs we have to realise that on earth it has no definite objective at all. It is a vast, self-protective organisation which seeks merely to exist and if possible spread. Its friends are those who support and serve it; its enemies—and its enmity has the unrelenting quality of an instinct—are those who have thwarted, controlled and suppressed it. It is against Soviet Russia, against every Protestant system, against every country which insists upon secular education; it is on the side of every government, however corrupt and evil, which attends Mass and makes the sign of the cross. Its real objectives, it alleges, lie in another world. In some strange existence outside time and space the reckoning will be made, and those who have swallowed the Athanasian metaphysics, taken the advice of their priests, and performed all their religious duties, will enjoy

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heaven, and those who have fallen short will pass to heaven through a state called purgatory or descend into hell for ever, according to the enormity of their disrespect. Bolsheviks, I assume, will *all* go to hell.

In the past it was the custom of the Church to suggest that the sufferings in hell and purgatory were essentially physical tortures, and simple folk were given pictures of the damned being burnt in flaming bowls, tormented by red-hot pincers, racked and maltreated very richly and variously. The state of bliss was less fully particularised. Nowadays one hears remarkably little of either the upper or lower aspect of the future state. Yet why is there no copious and attractive literature upon the subject? Why are there no speculative anticipations? Why have Catholic poets recoiled? It should be a most fascinating preoccupation to imagine that unearthly loveliness ahead. There are not even impostors to offer us dreams and visions. No one has ever produced a plausible page from a celestial Baedeker. Even Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* stops short at the gates of the Celestial City. We are left to imagine "these endless Sabbaths the blessed ones see". There is the Book of Revelation indeed, but who except cranks and lunatics reads the Book of Revelation? And that, after all, is symbolic prophecy and not to be mistaken for a picture of reality. The fact of it is that the majority of Christians are not even reasonably curious about the future life, and they are not curious because they have no more positive belief in it than I have. They are Christians because it is the most convenient and agreeable pattern of life for them, and for no other reason whatever.

And yet the Church is something more than a picturesque and reassuring frame for an everyday mode of living. It provides that, just as it provides dispensations, annulments of marriages for the wealthy, titles, blessings, missions, festivals and displays, but such things are by the way. It exists primarily for itself. It is always anticipating and warding off dangers and occasionally it counter-attacks. There is an incessancy in its self-preserving activities, and in this present phase of world crisis it is encouraging much partisan activity.

There comes to hand as I write a book, *Crisis for Christianity* by William Teeling, which summarises very clearly the ideas of a Catholic reaction and recovery that are stirring the imaginations of the more active faithful. I do not know

who William Teeling is. His title page supplies no information beyond his bare name ; he has written at least one other book, *The Pope in Politics* ; but he seems to have met and discussed affairs with most of the leading Catholics in Europe. So that his book gives us not only the present Catholic outlook, but one at least of the many faces the now highly diplomatic and incalculable British Foreign Office turns to the world.

The first thing to remark about this book is that it completely ignores the existence of any modern, scientific picture of the world. So far as I am able to judge, this is a real and not a deliberate ignorance. Mr. Teeling was probably educated in a Catholic atmosphere from which such knowledge is excluded. He seems to have no idea of the Good Life except in what survives to-day of Christendom, *White Christianity* that is to say, finding its completest embodiment in the Roman Catholic Church. Regardless of the foreign missions, he fears that Christ may "desert Europe" and leave it "to be completely overrun by the Yellow Races or the Black or the Communists and to pass through horrors undreamt of even to-day". The most Christian countries of Europe now, he says, are "Franco's Spain, Catholic Belgium and God-fearing Britain". Mrs. Nesta Webster, to whose mentality I have devoted a Note at the end of this book (Note 12c), or her ardent disciple Captain Ramsay, could not have a livelier horror of Jews and Russia. Outside the Christian pale there is one single movement to which he turns with a certain hope and kindliness, and there I think he is probably giving us a fair reflection of the Vatican-centred mentality. He has met and discussed matters, it is to be noted, with the present Pope. He seems to be a fair sample of how Catholics think.

He writes : "No matter what we may think of the Nazi leaders, or the methods they employ, they are at least instilling into the nation as a whole, and not only into those who might be their willing converts in a free country, a desire to help the maimed, to support one's neighbours, to work and live clearly, such as no democratic country is able to show. The democratic governments pay only lip service to much that is Christian, and they scarcely ever try to enforce it, while the Trade Unions and other socialist groups in this country [*i.e.* Britain] encourage, as indeed do some of the less-thoughtful Conservative die-hards, a form of class warfare which Christianity can never tolerate.

"My own feelings are all in favour of a free democracy

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giving the opportunity to lead a Christian life, seeing that a willing Christian is worth more to God than an unwilling one. But if the democrats do not respond, and under the cloak of freedom carry on a most un-Christian life, can we expect that God should favour them, rather than a disciplined body that at least is practising some of the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount?"

That is how the Church wishes to see the Nazis to-day. Our exponent ignores the implacable resolution with which the education of the young is being wrested from the Catholic teachers in favour of Wotan, and the bulk of this edifying book is a discussion of the possibilities of a sympathetic swamping of this Nazi movement by the incorporation of more and more Catholics into the Reich so that at last it will be possible to chip off the flapping ends of the swastika and restore the cross. It is all set out very attractively. The curious reader can learn how Dollfuß on "Great Catholic Day" (Sept. 11th, 1933) inaugurated the first German Corporative Christian State, and less explicitly how he stamped down socialism and labour. It was Dollfuß who betrayed and destroyed the radical republic that had ruled in Austria from the end of the War. It was he who stood behind Major Fey's smashing-up of the workmen's dwellings that had been the pride of the socialist regime in Vienna (Feb. 1934). This was not only a frankly uncivilised act but a piece of political folly.<sup>1</sup>

It left him face to face with the Nazis. They assassinated him in July 1934, but the Catholic Corporative movement went on less confidently under Schuschnigg, until the forcible realisation of the Anschluss in 1938 by the Nazi army made Austria an integral part of the Reich.

Ultimately Mr. Teeling thinks Germany will have an indigestion of Catholics. That is his hope. Large parts of Bavaria, Baden and possibly Württemberg and the Rhineland, are to break away and join up with Austria. Communism may gain control in Italy—Mr. Teeling throws that out quite abruptly and gives no reason for his assumption—and then the Vatican will have to make Vienna its headquarters. Nazism and Fascism will be at a discount, and the Authoritarian State, founded on the suggestions of the Papal Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (Pius XI, 1931) for a corporative society will be

<sup>1</sup> John Gunther's *Inside Europe* is particularly good on this.



## CHRISTENDOM

installed in Vienna, with the Emperor Otto at its head and the Pope near by.

There you have the sort of thing the energetic young Catholics of to-day can imagine; the sort of thing the present "God-fearing" British government is unobtrusively subsidising and spreading about, to the ultimate confusion of all Jews, Bolsheviks, Russians, atheists, men of science (but see the *Note* 12c on Mrs. Nesta Webster). . . .

So much for the Catholic contribution to human adjustment to-day.

We are too apt to forget the narrow educational limitations of those who figure as wise, unquestionable leaders of men. Everywhere that applies we live in a medley of ignorant systems, but it is the Catholic culture I am now discussing. It is a common tendency in our minds to believe that what we know clearly is also known clearly to other people. We are all too apt to believe that these dignified directors of human consciences know and understand the body of modern knowledge, that they have studied, judged it and rejected it.

But these Catholic prelates, so imposing in their triple crowns and mitres and epicene garments, are in fact extremely ignorant men, not only by virtue of the narrow specialisation of their initial education, but also by the incessant activities of service and ceremony that have occupied them since. They can have read few books, they can have had no opportunities of thinking freely. They are not nearly the cynical rogues so many non-Catholics think them; most of them are trying most earnestly to do right by the dim and dwindling oil-lamps inside their brains. They are quite ready to believe Mr. Belloc when he tells them, with that buoyant assurance of his, that Darwin was inspired by the ambition to abolish God in the universe. That fits in completely with their prepossessions. Why should they seek further? Mentally they live in another universe from ours, and the pity is that materially our universes intersect.

The slovenly, unorganised, intellectual world in which we and they live together, gives them no opportunity of grasping modern ideas without an impossible expenditure of perplexing enquiry. And to set against that we must remember that their world of theological elaborations remains an unmapped jungle to the unbeliever. They may have something to say to us but we are quite unable to get it, and conversely. The mind of

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mankind is still like a scattered jig-saw puzzle, bits of knowledge here and bits of knowledge there and no common pattern visible. And until we have something in the nature of that permanent world encyclopædia I have tried to foreshadow, so matters must remain. That revival of the Holy Roman Empire under the Emperor Otto, which strikes a realistic modern intelligence as fantastically absurd, presents itself to the Vatican intelligence in the guise of sober and subtle statescraft.

It is not necessary for us to wait for the return of the Holy Roman Empire to appreciate the nature of the Roman Catholic Christian State. In Eire (formerly Southern Ireland) and in Spain, the Church rules and we can watch it in operation. Franco's Spain is still too busy cleaning up the Republican Opposition, by shootings, expulsions and prescriptions, to develop the Christian life in its complete beauty, but in Ireland Catholicism has been in control for some years.

A stringent censorship of books and publications and a fairly complete control of education have produced a first crop of young men, as blankly ignorant of the modern world as though they had been born in the thirteenth century, mentally concentrated upon the idea of bringing the Protestant North under Catholic control in the sacred name of national unity. That tension of the young men to which so much social disturbance is due seems to be increasing. There has been a steady flow of emigrants to Great Britain, and as the war approached there were a number of bomb outrages designed to terrorise the British Government into an abandonment of Northern Ireland. These patriotic zealots set about their business in a vein of pious devotion. They take Mass and purify their souls by confession—of everything but the particular enterprise they have in hand. And if the British police deal sternly with these foolish, misguided youngsters, all Catholic Ireland will set up a great outcry, possibly with more and better bombing, to avenge or release a new crop of national martyrs.

The future of Ireland is incalculable. Hopeful Irishmen abroad have indulged in dreams of a restless and independent-minded people tiring of priests, piety and patriotism and returning presently as an animating influence to world civilisation. But how can these young men get the idea of that? We may perhaps find sounder intimations of Ireland's future in the experiences of the Catholic South American States. A people

## WHAT IS PROTESTANTISM ?

which learns little forgets nothing, and Church in Eire may be trusted to see to it that the young men of Ireland learn little and so sustain their tradition that inveterate animosities are dignified and desirable. The probabilities seem to point to murderous faction fighting, with Northern Ireland and England always to fall back upon in phases of comparative unity. There is a close temperamental kinship between the Irish and the Spanish, and the history of South America has already produced a series of bosses and pronounciamientos, vindictive massacres and pitiless wars.

Never has there been such heroic, cruel, senseless warfare as those little Christian hells in South America have known. Paraguay under Solano Lopez fought on until its population was reduced from 1,300,000 to under a quarter of a million. Regiments were made up of boys between twelve and fifteen, and women were enrolled to carry ammunition and stores. When these women could keep up no longer, they were either left to die by the roadside or, if there was any chance of their falling into the enemy's hands and yielding information, butchered out of hand. No doubt, many a wretched young conscript rebelled against his lot, but what could he do? He might hope for a change of leaders. He had no other ideas. It was impossible for him to have other ideas.

The Roman Catholic Church, that clumsy system of frustrations, that strange compendium of ancient traditions and habit systems, since it lies in the closest entanglement with the intellectual life of the Western world and still holds many millions in its grip, is certainly the most formidable single antagonist in the way of human readjustment to the dangers and frustration that now close in upon us all.

### § 14

## WHAT IS PROTESTANTISM ?

THE CONFLICT OF JUDAISM and anti-Judaism is a tragedy involving the misery and destruction of at most a few million people, and were it not that the abolition of distance has made every one of us his brother's keeper, it would be an incident

of secondary importance in the general collapse of civilisation that is now going on. But the struggle of Christianity to maintain its present ascendancy affects the larger part of the human race. The Roman Catholic Church is the most highly organised and efficient embodiment of Christian teaching, the Orthodox Churches of Greece, Serbia, Russia and the like are relatively negligible systems of ceremony and superstition, the British Imperial culture it will be more convenient to consider later, and the next group of world forces to which we must direct our attention is the Protestantisms, that series of movements and organisations which has arisen through the incapacity or unwillingness of people to accept this or that outstanding incredibility of the Catholic faith.

They protested. But for the most part they did not protest outright against the ensemble of Church beliefs. That would have been too awful for them. The earlier reaction was to discover some incompatibility between the Bible and the practice and teaching of the Church. The courage of the Protestant has grown by degrees. None of these earlier doubters were capable of facing, even in their secret hearts, the terrific isolation of denying Christianity. Such a denial was almost unthinkable in Christendom for those born within the pale, and they did not think it. For reasons we made plain in the preceding section, when we asked why it is that fairly well educated people cannot merely remain but become Roman Catholics, these early dissentients clung quite desperately to the assertion of their essential orthodoxy.

A convergence of mechanical inventions occurred in the sixteenth century to strengthen the Book against the priest; paper in sheets of a uniform size replaced parchment, and the rapid multiplication of books by printing from movable type became possible. Suddenly Europe was sprayed with Bibles and vernacular translations of the Bible, and the Church found itself assailed by a variety of new Protestantisms that steadily gathered strength and enterprise. Men brooded dubiously over the inspired word. All the Protestants began as "reformers", and their original protests were the distressful cries of honest men, who were—as I have noted in an earlier section—usually priests.

But though the Church monopolised education, ruled men's minds, sanctioned and condemned conduct, adjudicated on

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political claims, preached crusades, excommunicated, put states under interdicts and held an ever-increasing accumulation of land and wealth, it had never secured a physical grip upon the secular arm. It trusted for obedience to the spiritual fears it could arouse and the civil inconveniences it could cause. It could turn state against state and subjects against their rulers. It could dissolve allegiances. In an illiterate world this gave it an effective security. Many monarchs and princes lived in a state of uneasy resentment against the restrictions imposed upon their conduct. There was a continual struggle going on over such things as the appointment of bishops, the restriction of gifts and bequests to the Church, the taxation of its accumulating property. These lords and princes struggled and lived and died, but the Church had a massive continuity. Sooner or later it recovered its concessions and advanced to further aggrandisement. So long, that is, as its moral power, its grip upon the minds and consciences of the people, remained.

It could bluff its way through many scandals and abuses so long as faith was unimpaired. But these honest doubters and critics, with their arguments and proofs, gave a novel strength to the recalcitrance of the princes. Before, they had been recalcitrant like naughty boys, there had been fear and the possibility of repentance behind their outrages, but now they began to behave like youths growing up and discovering flaws and weaknesses in the character of the governess that hitherto even in their disobedience they had respected. They seized very gladly upon this new destructive criticism of the doctrines of the Church. They gave the reformers their protection and ample opportunity to spread their doctrines. So that a thinly concealed desire for autonomy and the confiscation of the vast estates of the Church, mingled very remarkably with honest protestations in the Protestant Reformation.

All this is a matter of history. We need not recapitulate the process by which the new Protestant States that detached themselves from Rome sought first to utilise and then to limit this process of protesting and questioning, of which they had made such good use, by setting up government-controlled Established Churches. Nor need we do more than glance at the way in which Peter the Great took a leaf from the English Establishment and applied the same process of nationalisation to the Orthodox Church in Russia. These Protestant State

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Churches play a diminishing role in the present drama of human affairs. What is of greater interest for the purposes of our present enquiry is the inability of any of these would-be-religious settlements, as reading, writing and controversy spread, to arrest the progressive release of the human intelligence.

The implementing of the Bible by printing had two divergent results. The most conspicuous at first was a definite return towards the spirit of Old Testament Judaism. The Old Testament is the larger, more various and intriguing part of the Word. One theme in it, which appealed more to the reformers and thoughtful subjects generally than to the princes, was the Calvinistic theme, the assertion of a stern Theocracy, the rebuking and warning of Kings by prophets, a republicanism under God. The other, politically more agreeable to the established rulers, attached less importance to predestination and more to the good works that came naturally from the Christian monarch. According to the former doctrine he might fail to be one of the elect and be denounced and disobeyed in this life and damned for ever in the next, however amiable his behaviour. According to the Lutheran alternative he justified himself by the inevitable rightness of the works his faith inspired.

Here we cannot enlarge on these attempts to adjust the new Bible Christianity to the needs of that period. But one very natural mental twist may be noted, and that was the widespread disposition of the Protestant Christians to identify themselves with the Chosen People, either mystically or physically. It would need a small encyclopædia to recapitulate the writers, movements and societies that have sought to prove some magical migration of the "Lost Ten Tribes" to Western Europe. There are British Israelites of that persuasion to-day. Such a jungle of absurdities it is, as could only flourish in an ill-instructed world. But one curious variant upon this craving to be an élite with specific divine favour we shall have to consider when we come to estimate the value of the Nazi movement in the complication of human destiny. . . .

The reversion of large parts of Christendom to Bibliolatry and the Chosen People idea was however only the first and most immediate result of the invention of printed books. Many accepted the authority and read and believed. But some read and thought and compared as they read. Gathering momentum

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more slowly was a new scepticism, which began to question the divinity of the Bible itself.

The doctrine of the Trinity was on the whole one of the less fortunate acquisitions of the Catholic Church. It has always given trouble from the days of the Arian heresy onward. It gave Charlemagne an excuse for breaking with Greek orthodoxy on the profoundly important point whether the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father only or from the Father and the Son. This procession of the Filioque originated in Spain, but Charlemagne seized upon it. Arian and Trinitarian, Latin and Greek—the history of their wars was written in the blood of millions. With the increase of reading and questioning in Christendom due to the printing of books, that triplex divinity began presently not merely to untwist but to lose its second and third strands altogether. Men dared presently to call themselves Unitarian, bowing politely but distantly to the Biblical record.

Then came another step. A fashion of scepticism spread among the European nobility and gentry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; bold spirits encouraged each other to the pitch of doubting and ridiculing the Bible altogether. They became naughtily wicked about it. They were Deists. There were soon enough of them to live in easy understanding with each other. Voltaire and Gibbon typify their quality. But Atheism still remained a rather shocking extravagance. Only temerarious individuals professed so extreme a lack of belief, and usually it was associated with defiant blasphemies and a general pretension to extreme depravity. By this note of defiance in their excesses, these eighteenth-century atheists betrayed a lingering belief in the God they had denied. It was the ideas of God and good not only in the world about them but in themselves that they fought down.

The bright young people who gathered about Sir Francis Dashwood at Medmenham Priory set out to be terrible fellows with their Hell Fire Club and their Black Masses, but how could one get the slightest thrill out of a Black Mass unless one had a lingering awe of the Mass itself? Without that much belief a Black Mass is an inane burlesque of nothing in particular.

It is only in our own time that Protestantism, the progressive etching away of belief by enquiry, has reached its natural finality in complete, untroubled disbelief in super-human authority. Even now many atheists prevaricate. If the

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word "God" means anything at all, it means a powerful being sufficiently anthropomorphic to have reciprocal relations with the individual man. A God who is not a personality is a contradiction in terms. But because of the ribald and ungenteel associations of the word "Atheist", a great number of atheistic thinkers and teachers and writers have clung ambiguously to the entirely deflated name of "God". God, they say, is the Absolute, he is a force not ourselves making for righteousness, he is the whisper of conscience, he is the brainless Thinker responsible for the mathematical order of the world, he is immanence. These are mere subterfuges, God-shaped vacuums.

A sort of Theism in effect, a theistic feeling at the beginning of life, may be as innate as suckling. The natural and necessary disposition of all immature creatures to believe they are being taken care of survives and will no doubt survive always. Even if they do not think in theistic terms they will still believe in protection. And throughout the Western world, in Christendom and Islam and Israel, children will be constantly hearing talk of God, so that a father-like divinity becomes the form of this basic feeling. Until a mind is fully adult, it finds great comfort in that ancient personification of a natural but transitory need. And there is still a disposition on the part of unbelieving parents, and of teachers who should know better, to utilise this craving for dependence in the moral training of their children. Most educational psychologists are convinced that it gives a better result in behaviour to teach children that the right thing should be done, not because of an all-seeing eye or a loving Father in Heaven, but because it is simply just that—the right thing to do. Innumerable Confucians and Buddhists have lived noble and beautiful lives without the assistance of an unseen Inspector.

Protestantism carried on to its end is a complete acceptance of the limitless, impartial and continually more wonderful universe that scientific enquiry is illuminating for us; that is to say, it culminates in atheism without qualification. Its final stage is a world of grown men, free from superstitious fear and free equally from belief in any guidance of the world that can relieve them from responsibility for the short-comings and failures of our race.



## THE NAZI RELIGION

### § 15

## THE NAZI RELIGION

WE COME NOW TO the Nazi movement, which is, in its possibilities of destruction, the most urgent challenge the human mind and will have ever had to face. Nazi Germany may well bring down conclusive disaster on our species. Yet its intellectual content is naive, and its sudden extreme importance the result of a convergence of accidents. A people almost stupidly warlike, led by a maniac, threatens the world and holds in its hands all the exaggerated powers of destruction modern science and invention have created.

It is plain that the Fuehrer is insane; he shows all the symptoms of a recognised form of sex mania, the jealous fear and hate of the great raping black man—who in his case becomes the Jew. Since in his case his obsession endangers the lives of people about him, he should be certified and put under restraint. But insanity has its advantages as well as its handicaps. It involves an abnormal concentration of purpose and nervous energy. In its phase of mania it abolishes or at least defers fatigue and sustains long spells of sleepless vigilance and penetrating distrust far beyond the compass of the normal man. These qualities alone never made any man the leader of a mighty nation. Hitler's insanity would have had little effect upon the world if it had not slotted very easily into certain essential needs of the German situation. But for that he might be shouting, frothing and orating in a madhouse at the present time. But it happened that he supplied just the inflexible spear-head, the inhuman pertinacity, required to give extreme expression to the feelings of a humiliated and outrageously treated people.

The Nazi movement, or something essentially like it, was inevitable. Had there been no Hitler, or were Hitler to vanish to-morrow, Germany would still be the problem sister among the European states, the embittered and crazy sister clutching the high-explosive bomb.

The Nazi movement was inevitable because she had a greater surplus of young people without reasonable hope of life

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than any other country in the world. They had no colonies to go to, no great business enterprises to develop; no employment of any sort. There you have the primary condition for a desperate outbreak. If you want the state of mind of pre-Nazi Germany compactly rendered, read Hans Fallada's *Little Man, what now?* That post-war generation grew up to explode and it has exploded. What else could have happened?

In § 12 the conditions under which social order may degenerate into phases of suspicion, persecution and plunder have been discussed. Post-war Germany displayed these conditions to an exaggerated degree. A new regime should have its own new education, to explain itself to the community, but the staggering liberal Republican Germany of the twenties carried on without any revolution in its schools and colleges. They had become a great means of patriotic consolidation under the Hohenzollern regime, they had been purged and vetted for a third of a century to that end, and now they were hard at work establishing in the minds of a new generation the innocence of Germany for the war and the conviction that she had never been defeated; she had been cheated and betrayed. She was suffering bitterly through no fault of her own. The teachers mined the democratic republic. Everything was ripe for an outbreak of hysterical patriotism and a great pogrom before Hitler became of the slightest importance.

And here another factor in the mentality of that dominating section of the German peoples, which we may call Nordic-conscious, came into play. Much of it was only less anti-Catholic than it was anti-Jewish. Its mentality had been framed upon the Lutheran interpretation of the Bible, and with a certain acceptable reversal it was possible to apply the conception of a Chosen People to the Germanic world. The Nazis took that over in one magnificent plagiarism. The Slav Prussians, the Alpine Bavarians, the *mélange* of Gothic and Celtic peoples in the Rhine-land, discovered that they were one single, pure race of beautiful blonds. They saw through their mirrors to the inner truth of themselves. They knew that in spite of appearances they had lovely, pure, blond souls. They turned upon the Jews and all foreigners with the completest paraphrase of the old Bible nationalism. And, wiser in their generation than the post-war liberal Republic, they have seized upon the schools and universities, and are doing their best to mould the men-

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ality of the entire Reich to this fundamentally Biblical idea of a militant Chosen People—Germanised.

Explicitly the new teaching retranslates Jehovah as Wotan, the old Kaiser's *unser alter Gott*, and flouts the most elementary concepts of Christianity. But it is impossible to estimate with what consistency this new religion of heroic combat is being imposed upon the youth of the Reich. Variations in statement may set the brighter ones thinking. All the books have not been burnt. We do not know how much of Social Democracy remains beneath the Nazified surface. We do not know how much counter-propaganda is going on in the outwardly submissive and still tolerated Protestant and Roman Catholic congregations.

I have cited Mr. William Teeling to show the Roman Catholic expectation of a German return to the faith, but I doubt whether he fully realises the relentless vigour of the educational drive of the new religion. In Austria just as much as in Germany they are turning the children against parent and priest. Mr. Teeling, I think, counts his Catholics before they are hatched. He would be wiser to count them after they are educated. The complete de-Christianisation of the entire Reich, of southern as of northern Germany, is, I think, the greater probability.<sup>1</sup>

But that involves no release of German thought; it is only a relapse into organised, relentless barbarism. Science in Germany has been silenced completely. There is no free scientific opinion any more. What remains of German science is enslaved to produce either secret discoveries of military importance or sustain the crazy ethnology of race superiority. But if research in non-German countries is forced, barbarism for barbarism, to adopt a reciprocal protective secrecy it may not be long before Germany realises a decline in her technical efficiency. She may cease to make discoveries herself and she may be able no longer to borrow them from abroad and develop them for her own purposes. This may move her to some loosening of the gag on her laboratories and an attempt to reopen communications with the alien world outside. And that again may undermine that still very unstable Wotan.

The problem of what will happen in Germany is the major problem of our immediate future. If the Nazi process continues

<sup>1</sup> See *School for Barbarians* by Erika Mann (1939).

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upon its present lines, then all the world must be given over to the servitude of war preparation, at least until Nazi Germany ceases to exist. So far, Germany has conquered the earth already. The demonstration of the impossibility of independent sovereign states under modern conditions is complete. This finishes it. The declared Nazi objective is to create a unanimous, belligerent Germany, a bloodthirsty nation, entirely tough and ruthless, resolved to use any weapons and any methods, however monstrous and destructive, in its march to world dominion. It will fight and conquer, or blow the world to pieces.

How will that drive to destruction end? It is possible but highly improbable that this desperate adventure may succeed, and the whole world, or what is left of it, may cower at last at the feet of Wotan's Chosen People, its masters. Or that after a world storm of war, more horrible than any war has ever been, Germany may be defeated and stamped out by victors become at last as ruthless as their enemies. Or as a third possibility; something may occur within Germany to shake the Nazi solidarity. Many accidents are possible. Mental forces at present unrevealed may appear. All German thought is not in concentration camps. Individuals may die, new groupings may occur, resolution may falter at the eleventh hour. The magnitude of the impending defeat will help more and more people to realise the magnitude of the reconstruction needed to restore safety and hope to mankind. Which means, *inter alia*, restoring security, hope and ample scope for energetic activities, to the stifled youth of Germany—from whose exploited frustrations all this trouble has arisen.

Before we leave this vital question of the German outlook, it may be well to note one sinister possibility in contemporary thought. Because of the peculiar filthiness and malignity of the Nazi concentration camps, because of the sheer horror of the stories told by the more or less broken creatures who have escaped from them, there is a widespread disposition to assert that Germans are particularly cruel; that they are indeed a specially evil-spirited variety of human being. Old stories of atrocities are being revived. Now this is to concede the Nazi claims to be a unique people. We cannot have it both ways, and, if we argue, as we have done in the pre-

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ceding sections, that the Germans are not the pure blond Chosen People they imagine themselves to be, but a *mélange* of Slav, Celtic, Gothic and Alpine elements with only a language to bind them together, then we cannot also entertain this idea of a specific sadistic streak in Germans.

Yet when we compare the evidence of those who have been interned in various countries, we find a general agreement in one respect, in regard to the attitude of the minor officials towards the prisoners, which at the first glance does seem to justify this particular charge against the Germans. There is a consensus of evidence by those who have been there, that in British and Russian prisons the attitude of the guard, the warder, the turnkey and so forth is generally sympathetic to his charges. Fellow feeling is his quality. He regrets his instructions and does his best to mitigate them. At times he may lose his temper or dislike and bully someone, but that is an individual lapse. But his German equivalent, there is no doubt of it, does his tortures with zest, hates his charges as though they were loathsome animals, and is ingenious in devising new pains and abasements and suffering for them. It is important that we should make up our minds about the real nature of this difference. If it is innate, then biologically it would be an excellent thing to kill all Germans.

But most of us who have known and seen Germans intimately have found them as humane and helpful as most people. They are generally more law-abiding than the Irish or the English. They like to be relieved of the dangers and troubles of responsibility by explicit directions. That may be a habit of mind due to a persuasion that this is a dangerous world with which it is unwise to take liberties, and it is quite compatible with these cruelties. The position of the Germans in Central Europe has always exposed them to an exceptional imminence of warfare. The country has been overrun time after time by alien armies. Plunder and rapine have flowed over the land. The German-speakers lived for the most part in a great plain, they had no mountains in which they could hide. It was only by screwing themselves up to fighting pitch and facing all comers that the divided German states were able to maintain themselves at all. They were called upon by their circumstances to be tougher fighters than any other Europeans.

Toughness therefore is as much in the German tradition

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as it was, for other reasons, in the Spartan. They had to despise fear and pain in themselves, and that for most human beings means despising fear and pain in others. The Nazi is not a born tough. If he were changed at birth and put among gentle, fearless people, he would not be a tough at all. He is a being innately as gentle as you and I, only he is inspired by an hysterical desire to be utterly tough. He refuses to give way to the horror of other people's torments, because from doing that it is only a step to giving way to pain and fear himself. And, attacking his own shrinking and disgust, he goes out of his way, in a sort of desperation, to devise and inflict ruthless, disgusting and intolerable things on the recalcitrants, the evil-doers, the detected conspirators—and we must remember that he has been made to believe them that—committed to him for reformation. Deliberate cruelty is not a characteristic of limitless strength. Great strength may be heedless and unconsciously cruel but not ingeniously and appreciatively cruel. It would get no thrill out of it. That is reserved for men and women who are inwardly afraid. It is sensitive people who seek to sustain and fix themselves by outrages.

Here it would take us too far from our main argument to examine other cases of torture and cruelty, the abominations done by Red Indian and Arab women for example, after battles. There is indeed no people on earth against whom some phase of cruelty cannot be brought. The English assume themselves to be a particularly gentle people, and with some truth now. Yet consider the cockshies and bear and bull baiting that delighted their ancestors in the past and the extreme savagery of the penal laws at the end of the eighteenth century. There is a strain of cruelty, suppressed or overt, in every human being. It is inseparable from self-assertion and the craving to exercise power. . . .

But enough has been said to qualify this charge of a special German cruelty. Those concentration camps must be forgotten if ever Germany comes to judgment. Vindictive reprisals may be part of the behaviour pattern of a patriotic Irish Catholic who knows no better, but not of a civilised man. Let the dead past bury its grievances. They can have no part in the rational reconstruction of human life. . . .

And here, apt to my argument, comes confirmation. Since

## TOTALITARIANISM

I wrote the above I have had a talk to a man who has been in a German concentration camp, and he told me of how an official, instructed to give him, for no particular reason, thirty lashes, fell into conversation with him after the second stroke, found out that he had been the editor of an illustrated paper he liked, sat talking journalism, omitted the rest of the prescribed beating, saying only, "I suppose your friend here won't give us away," quite after the Russian or English pattern. The friend was trustworthy. All fellow-prisoners are not trustworthy. One of the minor vilenesses of Dachau is that prisoners are bribed by petty indulgences and payments to report small relaxations of discipline. And many are in such physical misery, craving to smoke, craving for taste of sweetness, that they do.<sup>1</sup>

### § 16

## TOTALITARIANISM

TOTALITARIANISM IS NO NEW thing in the Western world. It is stated very completely in Hobbes' *Leviathan*. *Leviathan* is the State into which the individual life is almost completely incorporated. Its will is concentrated on the sovereign who heads the collective monster by right divine. He makes war and peace, he raises up and casts down, he levies taxes as he will. Even while Hobbes was preparing his book for press, England decapitated *Leviathan* in the person of Charles the First. The practical difficulty of the Corporative State has always been the question who should be the head and how a new head should succeed its predecessor. The High Anglican Church upheld the monarchy and maintained the hereditary principle, but the liberal gentry, the merchants and the tax-paying classes generally, were too much for the state monster.

Except in the case of Franco's Spain and the extinguished Catholic Corporative State of Dollfuss, the heads of the totalitarian states of to-day are usually sustained by "parties" of a distinctly gangsterish quality. At the cost of mental flexibility and adaptability, the corporate state gains a certain immediate concentration of will. Our problem is to estimate what amount

<sup>1</sup> See Stefan Lorant's *I was Hitler's Prisoner*.

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of mischief these obstinately knotted will systems may do with the monstrous weapons of the present time, before they themselves can be undone. It may be irreparable mischief.

The Nazi culture has been weighed in the previous section. Now we turn to its weaker associate, Fascism. This is immediately interwoven with the career of one single man, Benito Mussolini. Compared with Hitler he is sane, intelligent and human. He is vain, rhetorical and immensely energetic, with the energy not of morbid concentration but physical abundance. He is what many men would like to be. His career from his early days as a socialist conspirator, when oddly enough he was already nicknamed *il Duce*, to his present supremacy on the crest of middle age, is a fairly open book. It is laced throughout with a thread of the ridiculous. Where Hitler is an unqualified horror, Mussolini often is, as schoolboys say, a bit of an ass, which is much more endearing. Until we remember the castor oil campaign and the poison bombs in Abyssinia and the Lipari Islands, and Amendola and Mateotti and Roselli and the like, he is a lark. But then the lark stops singing. We know absurdities about him from which he cannot escape. We have the researches of the curious and the revelations of intimates. Madame Balabanoff<sup>1</sup> tells a fairly convincing story of his life at Geneva. Mr. G. Megaro<sup>2</sup> gives the particulars of his upbringing among the rebel spirits of the Romagna, quotes relentlessly from his early speeches, and shows with chapter and verse how strenuous have been his efforts to conceal the truth about his early career. That anxious eye on posterity, these absurd and belated efforts to escape the unrelenting pens that pursue him, are naturally pleasing to a writer with a weakness for derision.

But do not let us judge Mussolini only by the writings of his enemies. A more flattering study, written indeed in terms of unrestrained admiration, is *My Autobiography*. It was dictated by the Duce himself at the request of Mr. Richard Washburn Child, if possible a more fulsome hero-worshipper than the autobiographer himself, and it is amusing to compare its evasive flourishes with the relentless documentation of Megaro. If one learns little about the blacksmith father one gets hitherto disregarded particulars about the aristocratic Mussolinis of former days and their armorial bearings and castles and so

<sup>1</sup> *My Life as a Rebel* (1938).

<sup>2</sup> *Mussolini in the Making* (1938).



## TOTALITARIANISM

forth. Anybody on record who was ever called Mussolini seems to have been his ancestor and to have anticipated some or all of his distinctive qualities.<sup>1</sup>

Here we are not concerned either with biography or history except in so far as they throw light on the present world situation, but it is of very great importance in our estimate of the future of Fascism to realise that the personal vitality of its creator must now be passing its maximum. He was born in 1883. For some years there has been an increasing appearance of effort and uncertainty in his grandiose gestures. It is as if he felt Italy was slipping away from beneath him. He has manifestly become dependent on the tougher initiatives of Nazi Germany. He is less sure of the Church. A few years ago he was holding up Dollfuss in Austria as a barrier against Hitler. And where is that barrier now? He is losing face with his own people and his Nazi friends do little to help him in that matter. A few years ago it was dangerous to talk about him in Italy. Now they are talking.

Can there be a second Duce to follow the first? His high-spirited daughter and his son-in-law, Count Ciano, seem impatient to outdo his Fascist intemperance, but they will scarcely dare to attack and oust him, and it is not in his character to resign. Unless some unanticipated accident removes him from the scene, we shall have, not Giovinezza, but a middle-aged Fascism to reckon with from now on.

The Italian situation has several incongruous elements and their relative importance varies continually. The Vatican (*pape* Mr. Teeling and his friends) seems now firmly dug in at Rome. Its relations to Fascism have always lacked enthusiasm; it has ideas of its own. In the case of Fascist collapse or national defeat, the monarchy also stands ready to return and save the country. If the monarchy returned, would it be liberal or Catholic totalitarian? And the foreigner knows nothing of the possibilities of social discontent in Italy. Italy is a land peculiarly unfitted to stand the stresses of modern war. She is mostly coast line. She has no coal, and the Appennines are a thousand feet too low for her to have snowfields that would give her irrigation or water power. She can better defend herself against Germany in the Alps than against the sea power of France and Britain.

<sup>1</sup> See also Professor Salvemini's *The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy* (1928).

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All these considerations, I wrote them in 1939 and I see no reason to amend them, lead towards the same conclusion; that in the present war tornado, Italy was bound inevitably to play the secondary and gesticulating role to which she is now reduced. She may suffer many things. She has not the fixed will, and she cannot afford to have the fixed will, for war, at which the Nazi culture aims. It is Nazi Germany which remains the danger centre of mankind.

### § 17

## THE BRITISH OLIGARCHY

THE NEXT NETWORK OF thought and behaviour we must bring into this reckoning of world forces is the British Empire. British Imperialism, like Roman Catholicism, is a natural aggregation. No man planned it; it discovered itself in being. It is a crowned oligarchy, claiming to be democratic because it uses universal suffrage for election to one of its two Houses of Parliament, and to correct that it has an easily manipulated voting system and a proprietary press dependent on advertisement revenue for the information of its citizens. At no phase in history have the common people played a dominant part in the government of Great Britain, and in every phase the baronial oligarchy has prevailed. It is the tradition and education of this oligarchy which determines the behaviour of the Imperial Government and its role in contemporary world affairs.

Runnymede is the typical scene in the pageant of English liberties; Magna Carta documents the fundamental British situation. Magna Carta secures the liberties of the baron and free yeomen of the realm from all the main abuses of unqualified monarchy. It concedes no more rights to the churls and common folk of the land than it does to cats and dogs. About this central picture of the monarch amidst his barons. English history groups itself. The king is restive, but his peers are stern. They war with the Scots and the French and they conquer and parcel out Ireland. The Church carries on its habitual struggle for existence, asserts itself, is restrained; it becomes rich and is reformed and plundered. The Crown, with

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a Tory following and a sympathetic Church, tries to go back upon Magna Carta, asserting its divine right to absolutism, and one king is beheaded and another goes into exile with his family, leaving the oligarchy, with a manageable new dynasty of Hanoverians, in possession. It over-exploits its American colonies and loses them, and it happens upon a greater Empire in the East.

Never once in the proud island story does the will of the common people matter a rap. Occasionally they give trouble; they get rather out of control after the Black Death; and a little later we find them asking quite inconclusively:

“When Adam delved and Eve span  
Who was then the gentleman?”

They subside into deepening misery with the industrial revolution, and they reappear in the nineteenth century struggling for nothing more than better wages and rather more tolerable living conditions. There was nothing very democratic about British trade unionism—as we have defined democracy in § 6—and hardly more in the Labour Party that derived from it. The British Labour Party has never displayed any ambition to direct the affairs of the Empire. It aspires to nothing of the sort. It acknowledges the class inferiority of the workers and haggles by means of strikes and votes for a more tolerable but admittedly inferior way of living. By diminishing the discomfort of the masses and mitigating and soothing the exasperations caused by excessive business enterprise, it plays a stabilising role in the existing system. Not only is it utterly absurd to call the British government now or at any time in the past a democratic government, but it flies in the face of manifest facts to deny that it is farther off now from anything that can be recognised as a democracy than it was thirty years ago. The old Liberal Party was liberal in its professions at any rate; the Labour Party is densely conservative. The British masses neither rule nor want to rule. They are politically apathetic. They do not produce outstanding individuals to express their distinctive thoughts or feelings, because they have no distinctive thoughts or feelings to express. Outstanding individuals of humble origin are obliged to fall into more or less easy acquiescence with the ruling system. There is nothing

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The oligarchy still ruled and flourished materially under that unstimulating dynasty, but it made no further progress mentally; it ceased to be alert and adaptable, it became acquisitive, tenacious and conservative. Because of these qualities it presently irritated the thirteen American colonies into separation. The French Revolution took it by surprise. When the French in their turn decapitated their king it was not flattered by the imitation. It was scared. The revolutionary mob, it realised, was something different from the Ironsides. The Ironsides sang hymns and were sternly respectable. These people from Marseilles sang a much more alarming song.

The deterioration of an education is usually a complicated process. The mere fact that it is materially successful makes for uncritical contentment, and discredits change. Teaching falls into the hands of sound, orthodox, unenterprising men. It becomes humdrum. Interest shifts to the greater reality of the playing fields. The history of British education—of the education of the oligarchy, that is to say, for popular education had hardly begun—from 1760 to 1860 is a history of resistance to change and steady deterioration.

The nineteenth-century British gentry had nothing like the full-bodied classical education of the preceding centuries; they had only the pedagogic vestiges of that education. Mathematical studies had been introduced, but they were as stylistic and useless as the pedants could make them. By the middle of the nineteenth century the self-complacency of the British governing classes was being protected educationally not only from the subversive ideas of the French Encyclopædists and the French Revolution, but also from that more fundamental upheaval which was making biological science the key to a modernised mentality. A dwindling section of the upper classes could read French still; there was an attractive breadth in the French novel that the domestic fiction of the period did not display; but Voltaire and Gibbon were passing out of fashion. When gentlemen scoffed, Queen Victoria was "not amused".

Within the narrowing field of their cultivated ignorance, the young gentlemen prepared themselves vigorously for Parliamentary and administrative careers, and they developed an enthusiasm for open-air sport and that primitive form of bath called the Englishman's tub, which was quite outside the ideology of their Tudor and Stuart ancestors. Many of them

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class has remained barred against any understanding of revolutionary democratic ideas. The French Revolution frightened them and they pulled down the blinds upon it. They chose to think that liberty means nobody doing any work, that equality means bringing the under-housemaid up into the drawing-room and sitting her down to play the grand piano, to her and the general embarrassment, and that fraternity means embracing extremely unwashed—untubbed—people. Socialism again they regard as a dividing-up of all the property in the world into exactly equal shares for everyone. ("Inequality would come again to-morrow.")

Since the advent of a real social democracy would certainly mean very profound readjustments in life for them, these quick shorthand interpretations, so to speak, are far more satisfying and sufficient than a sustained argument. They insist upon thinking like that, and if their sons and daughters get other ideas they discourage them and "laugh them out of it" if they can. Everything indeed outside that little anecdotal world of theirs with its importances and routines, that world they would like to go on for ever, they know as little about as possible; and since they have never looked at such projects and interpretations directly and intelligently, they cease to be projects and interpretations and are apprehended vaguely as prowling monsters, threats and perils—the Red Peril, the Yellow Peril, the Black Peril—outside rational existence altogether.

I have had plentiful opportunity of sounding the minds of socially well-placed people, and in common with all the world I have watched the political conduct of the Empire during the past few searching years. Manifestly the mentality now ruling is one in which "Bolshies" are the enemies of God and man; men who go east are "pukka sahibs"; royalties, beloved mascots whose very pet dogs are adorable; and workers, honest drudges so long as they are not "spoilt", with only one weakness, susceptibility to foreign agitators. Americans it is understood are snobs in grain, but rich, and they should be kindly entreated. They will just simply fall down before the dear king and queen, whenever they get a chance. And also remember, "they cannot afford to see the British Empire overthrown".

If the men get a little away from that sort of thing, the

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chatter of their women brings them back to it. Their women interfere a lot; the Colonel's lady is the typical figure of feminine influence throughout the social scale. In the army, in the Church, in politics, her good word raises up or casts down. All this is recognised openly in novels, in plays and social intercourse, but when it comes to political discussion and *Times* leading articles, then reality has to be wrapped up in a lofty pretentiousness. . . .

This is undignified writing. This is in the worst possible taste. Yet I cannot explain the twists and turns of Mr. Neville Chamberlain unless I use the terms I do. How can I adorn him with splendid prose? I cannot see him as anything but essentially ignorant, narrow-minded, subconsciously timid, cunning and inordinately vain. He and his father Joseph before him appear to me as the appointed scavengers of the fading Imperial dream. Joseph Chamberlain, with his mean yet extravagant idea of monopolising the vast resources under the flag by means of an Empire *Zollverein*, aroused that convergent hostility of the Have-Not States, to which his son, with a sort of poetic justice, now makes his propitiatory surrenders.

I do not think Mr. Chamberlain wanted to "save the Empire". The Empire came and the Empire may have to go. He adhered to something less transitory. His more immediate purpose, unless all his acts belied him, was to save the oligarchy and its way of life from its predestined end. He could not understand that that way of life is over for ever. His family have been at such pains to achieve it, have been so eager, so clumsily eager, to serve it. Still he and his kind dream of friendly hospitable châteaux in a restored Holy Roman Empire or under a Spanish monarchy, and of a France, an Italy, a Greece made safe for the gentry again by the crushing out of all subversive forces. That I am convinced gives the ultimate range of the political vision of Mr. Chamberlain and his class.

When New York made an Exhibition to stimulate imaginations about *The World of To-morrow*, the British pavilion stressed the sentimental past, exhibited Magna Carta, crown jewels, pedigrees and an old English village. There was a genealogical diagram to demonstrate that George Washington was "one of us". There was not the faintest anticipation of that great fusion of English-speaking thought and activity

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throughout the world, of which all modern-minded men are dreaming. World Federation? Instead there was the most definite reminder that the British Crown and Church stood gently but inexorably in the way of anything of the sort.

In the days before "Tariff Reform" it was possible for young Englishmen to dream of the Empire as a great propaganda and medium for liberal and broadening democratic methods, free migration, free trade and open speech, steadily weaving all the world together. It was a dream that captured many an alien imagination, as for example, Joseph Conrad's, but now it is an altogether abandoned dream. The idea of the Empire as a trap towards world unification has lost all plausibility, and while the Chamberlain school of statecraft engages in its propitiatory dispersal, the creative imagination turns to the still living possibilities of one common culture of the English-speaking peoples.

Before the advent of Mr. Churchill an increasing number of British people have looked to the present President of the United States for some sort of world leadership. He is a good, liberal-minded fellow anyhow, but in a sort of despair of anything better they did their best to exaggerate him. Britain herself produces no one to speak whatever liberal thoughts she has to the world. Churchill is essentially a war leader. She has nobody even of the Roosevelt quality, and even were there such a man it is difficult to imagine how under existing conditions he could emerge to popular attention. Without an objective, dumb, the Empire is becoming an anachronism, an Empire of passive and inadequate resistance. Its progressive disarticulation seems inevitable, and if after all the dream of a federal reassembling of the English-speaking and English-reading communities struggles towards realisation, it will owe very little to the Imperial tradition and organisation. North America, with its looser, freer and more abundant mental activities, is far more likely to become the backbone of such a reconstruction, and to carry it out on a democratic rather than oligarchic ideology. Monarchy, Church, influential families, experienced administrators and old Parliamentary hands, would merely clog and encumber the development of the social machinery necessary for a modernised world state.

So far from exercising any further leadership in world affairs, Great Britain is much more likely to withdraw into

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itself. With a dwindling population, an inadequately progressive educational system falling more and more behind the headlong needs of our time, and a shrivelled prestige, the island may play only a secondary role in the effort to effect a world synthesis. It may remain a crowned oligarchy yet for many years, fatuously content with itself and still as unaware as it is to-day of its continual decadence. To-day in the Eastern world one can find a dozen anticipatory parallels, the self-satisfied and self-contained vestiges of what were once proud and important ruling powers.

Possibly this residual Old England, in addition to its hunting and shooting and fishing and race meetings and so forth, will carry on, will be almost forced to carry on, a small but bickering warfare with the equally decadent dictatorship of Catholic Ireland. In that manner, if the world fails to re-construct itself, the British Islands seem likely to pass into the gathering darkness of the future. And if after all, mankind as a whole does meet the challenge of facts and the scientifically organised world state emerges, it will be into enlightenment rather than darkness that these island residues will dissolve. Macaulay's New Zealander may arrive after all, and when, according to the prophecy, he has visited the ruins of St. Paul's, he will be shown over the remains of the Houses of Parliament ("curious and rewarding" as Baedeker would put it) and do his puzzled best to imagine what that strange narrow life was like, assisted by extracts from Hansard, carefully preserved gramophone records of important speeches, enlarged photographs of Mr. Gladstone, movie glimpses of Mr. Neville Chamberlain in a state of indignation, and the still surviving political novels of Mrs. Humphrey Ward.

### § 18

## SHINTOISM

AND NOW WE MAY consider another great mental system ruling the minds and behaviour of millions of men and women, which has recently become a leading factor in world destiny. This is Shinto, the official and compulsory religion of the Japanese.



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Formally other religions are still tolerated, the Roman Catholic for example, but only on condition of ceremonial and practical acquiescence in the main doctrine of the creed, the recognition of the supreme divinity of the Mikado. Mr. A. Morgan Young has recently published an admirable summary of this culture,<sup>1</sup> and to this mainly I am indebted for the material of this section. He in turn gives his sources for whatever statements he makes, so that the interested reader can easily verify and expand what is given here.

The basis of Shinto is the Kojiki, a compilation of the eighth century A.D. It is readable in its entirety only by scholars, its language being far more remote from the Japanese of to-day than eighth-century Anglo-Saxon would be from current English. For various reasons only portions of it have been modernised for general use. It begins with a sort of storm of Gods neither made nor begotten but passing away. From this tumult emerge two highly sexual figures, Izanagi and Izanami, who might be described in Hollywood language as male and female "sex appeal". They respond to each other with tremendous vigour, begetting gods and islands and at last a Fire God who burns up his mother Izanami. But by this time Izanagi is so set on procreation that everything about him procreates; he throws off his clothes and they become sea gods and land gods. Finally he produces the Sun Goddess from his left eye, the Moon God from his right eye and the headlong Susa-no-o by blowing his nose. After which he seems to have retired and the Sun Goddess and Susa-no-o occupy the stage.

After various remarkable adventures, no doubt of the greatest spiritual significance and full of lessons for the true believer, Susa-no-o meets a formidable damsel-devouring dragon with eight heads and other alarming accessories, makes the beast drunk with saki, and then kills it and cuts it up. But one of the tails resists and breaks his sword, because in it there is hidden a better sword. This he extracts and presents to his sister the Sun Goddess. It lies to-day, thickly swathed in brocade, in the Family Shrine of the Imperial House in Tokio. It is one of the Three Sacred Treasures, the sword, the mirror and the jewel, which the Sun Goddess transmitted to her heirs, the divine Emperors, the living Gods of Japan.

To the Western mind, accustomed to a widely different

<sup>1</sup> *The Rise of a Pagan State* (1939).

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system of myths and absurdities, this reads like monstrous nonsense. But it is wiser not to say that in Japan. For example, Mr. Morgan Young tells of what befell Dr. Inoue Tetsujiro, a loyal but liberal-minded Shintoist who ventured to doubt the authenticity of the Three Sacred Treasures. He was denounced, his publisher was penalised, and he was expelled from the Imperial University. Later on, while attending the memorial service of a friend, he was set upon by a gang of pious ruffians and beaten so that one eye was destroyed. So much for a man who had attempted to spiritualise and rationalise the Japanese faith. No one was punished for the outrage upon him, which indeed is only one sample among many of the spirit of renascent Shintoism. It is quite good form to jump at a man who uses a phrase or makes a gesture that seems lacking in piety, and stab him. It is like those fierce old colonels in England who assault people for not standing stiff to "God Save the King".

Mr. Morgan Young makes some interesting suggestions about the temperamental make-up of the Japanese. There are important Mongolian strains in them, but he quotes Putnam Weale (*The Truth about China and Japan*) to support the thesis that the virile and dominating factor is Malay. Their clothing beneath the kimono, the construction of their houses, their lapses into moody murderousness are all Malay. He insists upon the constant recurrence of head-hunting proclivities in their history. An unintelligent blood-thirstiness is in their nature and tradition. They have an inferiority complex with regard to Chinese and Western civilisation, which takes the form of an extravagantly aggressive and assertive patriotism. I have followed my authorities in these generalisations. So far as official Japan is concerned they seem to be thoroughly justified. They account for the fact that the head of the state is not so much a leader as a mystically sacred symbol. The rulers of Japan to-day are Nazis without a Hitler, Fascists without a Mussolini. In the animal world an acephalous monster is sometimes tougher to tame or destroy than one with a head.

From the deliberate isolation of Japan in the seventeenth century—when all the bickering Christian sects, and in particular Xavier's Jesuits, were expelled, and the entry of foreigners and foreign travel prohibited absolutely—until the barrier was broken down by Commodore Perry in 1853, there was an age of internecine feuds and exciting strife of every sort. Vendettas

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were honoured. The play of the *Forty Seven Ronin*, the most popular of Japanese plays, is the heroic consummation of a vendetta, ending, after the decapitation of the initiator of the feud, with the hara-kiri of these forty-seven heroes. Japan was indeed a romantic head-hunting preserve for the tough. And among the tough everywhere loyalty to the gang is the supreme virtue, loyalty to the gang and no mercy for the flats, the serfs, the common cattle, outside the gang.

This is as true of the "wide guys" of Soho as it is of the gangsters of San Francisco. Wherever there are young men without proper employment the tough guy reappears. The ultimate sin is "squealing"; the crowning heroism is silence under the severest questioning; the master triumph is brilliant outrage. These gallant fellows in Japan would rape or try their swords on peasants without compunction. In such an atmosphere of swagger and loyalty lived the Daimyos, the feudal noblemen, and their henchmen the Samurai, until the barriers were forced and the outer world broke in.

About the beginning of this century, the code of honour of these bickering toughs, the noble warrior's way of life, was idealised by a certain Dr. Nitobe, who wrote a book in English called *Bushido*, "through which the word was for many years far better known abroad than in Japan". He incorporated all the finest pretensions of European chivalry. His Samurai became the disciplined and fearless knights errant of the world. It took in a lot of people—including myself. In *A Modern Utopia* (1905), the world was taken care of by an order of "Samurai". They assumed the role of the Syphograutes in the original *Utopia*, and in that they anticipated the Communist Party commissars very strikingly. Since 1900 we have had, *inter alia*, the Nazis, the Fascists, the Phalangists. I was thinking with my generation.

In a lecture at the Sorbonne, in 1927, *Democracy under Revision*, I returned to that idea of a disciplined liberal "party". It arises naturally and inevitably out of the problem of contemporary indefiniteness and the relative ineffectiveness of intelligent people.

Perry's guns in 1853 aroused that ringed-in Japan of blood feuds, hara-kiri and heroic decapitations to the existence of a dangerous and aggressive outer world. The Japanese nobles and their samurai, given over altogether to pride, realised their

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enormous practical inferiority. While they had been enjoying life after their fashion, the outer world had stolen a march on them. It was plain they had to modernise or succumb—like India, like Java. They had to learn the tricks of these foreigners, and learn them quickly, their machinery, their weapons and generally how they did it. At first it seemed that Christianity might be part of the coveted advantages, and Japan thought seriously of making Christianity a state religion. After much recalcitrance and rebellion, the Shinto religion was revived and the country was unified under the divinity of the Mikado.

Fortunately for the nascent Japanese, the British Empire has been dominated by persistent Russophobia. It is a constitutional disease of the British ruling class. Every assistance was given, material and mental, to the new forces of consolidation, and in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) an Eastern Asiatic power shattered the prestige of Europe on land and sea alike. The Great War completed the job. After that there were no more enquiries for an adaptation of Christianity to the headship of a divine monarch—a slight improvement upon the Royal Headship of the Established Church of England. Instead of Christianity, Shinto, a genuine home product, came into its own.

And gradually, in association with the concentration of power in the warrior class, it has consolidated itself and all its absurdities as the sole religion of Japan, driving every alternative faith and conception underground. For the better part of the period of modernisation since 1868, there has been a steady influx of Western science, Western ideas, Western radicalism into Japan. There were endless circles in which "advanced" ideas were discussed freely. With an astonishing swiftness that liberal Japan has disappeared. A few murders, a clean-up of schools and colleges, and the thing has been done. In the place of an intelligent people we face a national monomaniac. This, from our present point of view, is the most important aspect of the whole business.

With an apparent singleness of purpose Japan has flung itself into the attempted conquest of China and the most reckless defiance of the chief naval powers of the world. Here, as in the case of Nazi Germany, we are left asking, "Where have all these treasonable mitigating people gone?" "Where"—and this is perhaps even more to the point—"has the rational element gone in those who have succumbed?" So many who

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once talked liberalism seem now to be wholehearted belligerent patriots.

Our essential theme in this book is the possibility of changing the mental superstructure, the knowledge, idea and habit system of mankind. In that we hope. The tremendous rapidity of this last Japanese change-over is almost incredible. Is it an irreversible process? And if so, what will it go on to next? Can it stand military defeat in China?

Many things seem possible in this catastrophic world of to-day, but one of the higher probabilities of the present world situation seems to be the failure of the Japanese attack on her greater neighbour. China has astonished the world by her tenacity, by the steady unification of her resistance, by the emergence of a sort of pervading militant wisdom. The Japanese have been stupendously energetic and stupendously unoriginal. There has been much detailed cunning in their operations but no essential wisdom. Desperadoes may murder many people but they cannot divide and rule a hostile country. What will happen in their heads as they realise defeat with nothing but that childish Shintoism of theirs and a tradition and cant of swaggering victory to sustain them?

Will it be wrath and social revenge? Many of these young warriors who landed in China full of the toughest dreams of heroism, victory, rape and authority, must now be in a state of profound disillusionment. They will have a sense of having been fooled. And in China—unless I under-estimate the quality of Chinese and Communist propaganda—they will have met not only hardship but ideas. Sooner or later they must go back to a country where the endurance of the peasantry and the people has been tried to the breaking point.

Here are the same factors that existed in Russia in 1918, the factors for a crude and violent social revolt. There is no greater threat to a government than the return of a defeated army. It will go ill in such an event with nobles and dignitaries and priests, and it is quite among the possibilities of the next few years that the last divine heir of the Sun Goddess, shorn of all divinity, may share a parallel fate to that of the last Little Father of Russia. Then, starting from an even lower level than Russia in 1918, Japan will have to reconstruct its social and economic life.

That may be one possibility, but history never repeats itself

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exactly, and revolutionary methods have changed very greatly in the last twenty years. As one turns these matters over in the mind, China looms not merely as a military but as a mental reality of the first importance. What systems of thought are operative there, what new systems of thought are worming their way into the brains—and many authorities declare that they are rather above the human average—of that immense multitude? That is a question of more importance in a forecast of the human outlook than any we have hitherto discussed.

### § 19

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THE PRIMARY IMPORTANCE OF China in the current interplay of human forces is due not only to the fact that it is the greatest mass of human beings with any sort of solidarity in the world, but also to its manifest educability. It is not only the largest but now it is probably the most plastic mass on earth. Hitherto we have been weighing the influence and destinies of set and blinkered cultures. But in China, tradition, cultural ideas, cultural methods are passing through a phase of extreme dissolution, the mind of every intelligent man is in a state of stimulated enquiry, and creative propositions, if they could be presented there, would surely have a freedom and effectiveness such as no other part of the world can display.

The immemorial basis of Chinese life is an industrious peasantry, the primary source of wealth, on whom the landlord, the loan manager, the merchant, the tax collector have lived in a state of inconsiderate refinement for a long period. When the pressure of taxation or population becomes intolerable, the peasant becomes a bandit and the tension is relieved. Bandits says J. D. M. Pringle, are the Chinese equivalent of the "unemployed", they levy an unsystematic dole. There have never been any fixed impediments to peasants acquiring wealth or gentlefolk becoming poor, and so, though there has always been much poverty, it has produced little class antagonism. No race difference exists between rich and poor; there is no superimposed nobility, no chivalry with a strong military and

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hunting tradition. The absence of great natural barriers led to a precocious expansion of government to a size that, almost from the outset, made a class of literate administrators more necessary and more important than soldiers.

The early need for writing in China arrested its development beyond a quasi-pictorial and clumsily elaborate stage. It was wanted too soon, before it could undergo simplification into a syllabic or alphabetical system. This also contributed to the distinctive quality of China, to the Chinese—if we may coin a word—*para-democracy*. The extreme difficulty of the written language did indeed put popular education out of the question and set a practical barrier between literate and illiterate more effective as between man and man than any Western class distinction, but at the same time the very difficulty of scholarship obliged the mandarin state to draw continually upon the clever sons of poorish homes. These special conditions converged to give China its distinctive social and political structure, a structure so difficult to alter without complete destruction, that so far neither invasion nor civil commotion has ever changed it in any essential particular. When for example the Manchus conquered the land, they merely founded a new dynasty and imposed the now vanished pigtail—rather by way of assimilation than subjugation. So far. But now this refractory system has to face something more powerful than Hun or Manchu or Japanese; it has to face change of scale, the change of pace, that is shattering all other human societies.

The religious basis of the Chinese system is equally in contrast with the God-centred beliefs of the West. Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism are all alike atheisms. There is no one God standing in any personal relationship to man. Confucianism is concerned entirely with the present life, it discourages speculation and inculcates an excessive ancestor worship and respect for the state. It insists upon public service and dignified self-control, not to please a god but simply because that is the right way of living. Taoism is in contrast a religion of abandonment to nature. Politically it is anarchistic and around it cluster a great accumulation of superstitions, spiritualisms, spookisms and quasi-magic beliefs, incantations and astrology. Every folly of the wonder-lovers of to-day has been anticipated by Taoism. Buddhism teaches a transmigration of souls, souls that may be entirely unaware that the good and evil they experience

is due to their behaviour in a previous embodiment.

Essentially these religions are behaviour systems—or misbehaviour systems. Taoism is frankly anti-social, an imaginative dissipation of the mind and will, and Buddhism is at least a withdrawal from life. They are both what it is now fashionable to call escape systems. Their teaching finds its Western equivalent in the "detachment" of Mr. Aldous Huxley. Both foster religious orders and inflict a great multitude of monks and nuns upon the community, and neither has anything of importance to contribute to that intelligent reconditioning of the human mind which the present world situation demands. Politically and educationally, the yellow (or grey) clad Buddhist monk with his begging bowl and his pimping possibilities is a social nuisance; the convent passes by insensible degrees into a common brothel.<sup>1</sup> But Confucianism is almost pedantically upright. It is the religion of a respectable totalitarianism. Whatever political backbone is found among the older generation of Chinese is in the tradition of Mencius, the disciple and exponent of the master.

In the crucial period of the nineteenth century, China was more self-satisfied with itself than Japan, and altogether indisposed for fundamental change. It had no such sudden shock as Commander Perry gave the Japanese, and it had no consciously ruling caste to react effectively to a warning. It knew the European better than the isolated Japanese, and it had long since formed a poor opinion of the physical and moral bustle and inelegance of Western living. It found the Westerners ugly, truculent and requiring cautious management; but although they had a variety of curious mechanical advantages it deemed them despicable. Since it took on an appearance of Westernisation, China held out against modernisation for half a century after the Japanese awakening. It endured much. We cannot even sketch that story here from the British Opium War onward. China's first reaction to these aggressions was violent xenophobia. This culminated in the Boxer outbreak (1900) and the punitive looting of the Summer Palace at Peking by the allied European powers. Still China would not pull itself together to fight. Outlying parts of its Empire fell away; ports and provinces were seized; this did not affect the routine in the regions still intact. Even under direct foreign rule much

<sup>1</sup> See Lin Yutang's *My Country and my People* (1936).



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of the old life still carried on. The ancient order seemed as incurably contented with itself as the British.

Here is how that keen and witty writer Mr. Lin Yutang characterised the Chinese way of living—so recently as 1936. “. . . Face, Fate and Favour. These three sisters have always ruled China, and are ruling China still. The only revolution that is real and that is worth while is a revolution against this female triad. The trouble is that these three women are so human and so charming. They corrupt our priests, flatter our rulers, protect the powerful, seduce the rich, hypnotise the poor, bribe the ambitious and demoralise the revolutionary camp. They paralyse justice, render ineffective all paper constitutions, scorn at democracy, condemn the law, make a laughing stock of the people's rights, violate all traffic rules and club regulations, and ride roughshod over the people's home gardens. If they were tyrants, or if they were ugly, like the Furies, their reign might not endure so long; but their voices are soft, their ways are gentle, their feet tread noiselessly over the law courts, and their fingers move silently, expertly, putting the machinery of justice out of order while they caress the judge's cheeks. Yes, it is immeasurably comfortable to worship in the shrine of these pagan women.”

So Mr. Lin Yutang in 1936, and in 1936 he still despaired of any purposeful consolidation of his country for many years to come. But in three years Japanese military savagery has brought about a desperate unification beyond any foresight.

Mr. Lin Yutang is by nature and disposition a Taoist of the finer sort. He betrays at times a certain patriotic uneasiness and impatience, but these are lapses from his usual artistic self. For the most part he sustains a genteel detachment from the revolution of 1911, which ended the Manchu regime and the pigtail for ever. He deplores the novel energy of Sun Yat Sen, who “kept up his reading”. He notes that Chiang Kai Shek and his financial ally T. V. Soong work “like horses”. His heart turns back to “Merry old China” in all the infinite strength of laziness. “The racial tradition”, he concludes, “is so strong that its fundamental pattern of life will always remain”.

Nothing in the world is so perennial as that. The history of China since the fall of the Manchus displays altogether new forces at work. It is not the old, old story. However re-

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than any other human aggregation.

So faded and nerveless are the old conceptions of life, so Taoist, that the entire collective mentality of China is now in effect a *tabula rasa* upon which it is possible to write almost any constructive idea. And what is written will be evidently determined very largely by movements in the general world mind outside the boundaries of China. The native contribution is in the nature not of initiatives but adaptive qualifications. Lin Yutang, in one of those involuntary lapses of his from "detachment" into patriotic distress and irritation, notes that a dozen years after the death of Sun Yat Sen, who is by universal consent the father of the new China, no Chinese writer has yet displayed the energy and intellectual power needed to write a full and competent account of the Founder's life and teaching. It would certainly be an immense commercial success; it would be of the greatest political importance; and in that land of lassitude, evasion and passive resistance to change, nobody produces it.

It would seem as though a Chinese mind must needs go abroad and lead a foreign life before it can even begin to see China. And when it sees China it still depends upon a push from the exterior for action.

The most vital new thing so far that has been written upon this blank Chinese intelligence is a sort of Communism. In a later section we must examine Communism as a world force, but here it is to be observed that just as Chinese democracy is not the same thing as Western democracy but a *para-democracy*, so Chinese Communism is not by any means the Russian article, but a *para-communism*. It has rejected Borodin's crude ideas of liquidating the "rich", the class war and collectivised farming. It is essentially a peasant communism, a revolt against rent, taxes, debt, forestalling, speculative marketing and all the handicaps that enslave the little man. Its leaders are often the fanatical enthusiastic sons of wealthy men, sons who have read Marx and Lenin, but the responding rank and file are the commonalty. It educates earnestly and well, it carries on a propaganda by means of plays, concerts, meetings. It promotes a modernised script. It is making its people into newspaper readers. It is in fact producing a new sort of Chinese common man, with a genuine workers' and soldiers' solidarity. Everywhere the peasants, even those who do not

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belong to the Party formally believe in it. Its "Red" Army is as sturdy as any China has ever seen, with partisan tactics peculiarly adapted to the country.

A second set of ideas which is being scrawled across the Chinese *tabula rasa* is the New Life movement. This was deliberately created by Chiang Kai Shek as a rival and substitute for Communism. Chiang Kai Shek is at present the central figure on the Chinese stage; he has been fairly explicit about his ideas and motives, and there is considerable artlessness in what he says. He has an interestingly responsive and representative mind. He speaks with profound reverence of the influence of his mother in forming his character. She remained an earnest Buddhist to the end. She watched over his tender years. She trained him for an energetic life of public service and self-subordination. He took his early political leadership from Sun Yat Sen and the Kuomintang. Sun Yat Sen was a Methodist with a passionate desire to free his country from "Western Imperialism". This brought him at last into close association with the anti-Imperialist Borodin. It was Borodin's aggressiveness and the killing of rich people and foreigners that estranged Chiang Kai Shek from Sun Yat Sen.

Chiang Kai Shek became for a period militantly anti-Communist. His marriage with Miss Mayling Soong, a member of one of the richest families in China, may have had its subconscious influence upon him. His close association with the Soong family, and particularly with T. V. Soong, has relieved him of many temptations that have overcome other leaders less financially secure. Madame Chiang Kai Shek is a woman of manifest beauty and force of character, and for some time she seems to have done the religious thinking for her husband. He was baptized as a Christian in 1930. Their type of Christianity is a simple evangelical Bibliolatry, inclining to fundamentalism rather than to either Modernism or Catholicism; it is fundamentalism with a dash of Buchmanism. Every day the Generalissimo reads his Bible and prays for guidance. He prays regularly and abundantly and says grace before he eats. In moments of doubt the sacred book is opened and consulted for an omen.

The New Life Movement is not however professedly Christian, though it speaks in the name of the Christian Sun Yat Sen. It is essentially a patriotic behaviour system, attacking

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opium, polygamy and "immorality" generally, tobacco, alcohol, tea, coffee, meat. It is in violent reaction from the enervation of Taoist self-indulgence. It expresses the realisation of the middle and upper classes that things are getting serious for them. Its ambition is to be stern and powerful, to promote a "clean" and strenuous life.

Chiang Kai Shek has been immensely impressed by Fascist and Nazi propaganda, he speaks in profound admiration of "the strength of present-day Italy and Germany", he swallows, as I did, the legend of Bushido (§ 18) and like Mr. Teeling (§ 13) he believes that the Nazi disciplines make for brotherhood, obedience and particularly for that "cleaner" life of sexual and imaginative suppression which leaves the mind free for militant authority. (Both he and Mr. Teeling would be all the wiser and better for a cleansing month in the latrines at Dachau.) But since the aim of the New Life is power even more than purity, it is flatly opposed to any infringement of the rights of private property. It was indeed primarily organised for that end, as a counterblast to communism, and by its emphatic denunciation of communists and "traitors" and its rigid insistence upon the payments of debts, it makes a special appeal to foreign finance. Its Methodist virtues are a means to an end. The end is self-righteous power. No doubt the New Life stimulates the open campaign against opium, vice and insanitary living, and no doubt it releases a genuine streak of solemn masochism in the composition of the Generalissimo, but how far the natural Chinaman will give himself whole-heartedly to the New Life remains to be shown. The failure of Prohibition in America and the social demoralisation caused by it, seem to have had no lesson for Chiang Kai Shek.

For my own part I believe in the complete honesty of Mr. and Mrs. Chiang Kai Shek, but it is plain that they have not the faintest conception of the demands that fate is making upon mankind. They sound indeed in all their published utterances terribly limited and self-satisfied, and however much we may be pleased to see China led to victory against the Japanese, that is no reason why we should exaggerate the intelligence and vision of these two leaders, because they are instrumental in that hoped-for *débâcle*.

Such are the chief forces that are operating to produce the China of to-morrow—Chinese Communism, or, to define it

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more clearly, *para-communism*, and this New Life, which is plainly *para-Fascism*. Neither is yet what one can call a commanding force. They combine against the common enemy, but they have no real convergence. The end of the war with Japan will release rather than conciliate their oppositions. China liberated will become more and more definitely a battleground of world ideologies. She will waver between Soviet Russia and Fascism, between Christianity of the J. D. Rockefeller type on the one hand and a tentative socialism after the fashion of the New Deal, rather to the left of the New Deal, on the other. One may well doubt if she has any initiative of her own to give the world.

In most Chinamen there struggle a Confucian, a Taoist and a Bandit. To judge by the present state of things that completes the inventory. And yet there is an accumulation of artistic work, a record of invention and ingenuity to the credit of China, witnessing to something not covered by any of these three factors, to some constructive element that existing circumstances have failed to release, some higher intellectual development which may still be waiting there—for the proper evocation.

This raises what is from our present point of view a very important issue. Is there a real scientific modernism, a constructive originality, latent in that very respectable Chinese brain? Has it unexploited mental reserves? That is a question that might be extended far beyond the Chinese horizon. At present China is almost completely unaware of the ecological view of life. She has never heard about it. Science subsidises no missions; it has failed even to organise its friends in defence of its own freedoms. Almost all this "new education" in China, that has been replacing the classics since the revolution, has been ear-marked for the service of some narrow dogmatism or other. Her brightest intelligences have had but a poor chance of any broader vision. So in China even more than in our Western world, political and social life is still a disastrous clashing-together of blinkered minds. What she thinks new is already old. She is no more prepared to attack the gigantic problems of adjustment that close in upon her, in common with the rest of the world, than she was thirty years ago.

In these thirty years she has done great things. The greatest has been to discover and assert her national independence and solidarity. And still she has everything to do. It

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is either a prelude to renaissance or failure, to have installed a Methodist Generalissimo in the place of the Son of Heaven, got rid of pigtailed, given up smoking, drinking, swearing, necking and suchlike scandalous behaviour, and driven the opium traffic underground. Things will not stay at that.

So China, because of its nascent state, because at present there is no deep-rooted system of ideas imposed upon her character and habits, presents, in the barest form, the universal human problem. What prospect is there of an effective drive towards a scientific understanding of history and present realities, and of a reconstruction upon the lines of that knowledge?

Here again we must repeat the refrain of this book.

There exist already scattered about the world, all the knowledge and imaginative material required to turn not merely these seething four hundred million people but the whole world into one incessantly progressive and happily interested world community. All that is needed is to assemble that scattered knowledge and these constructive ideas in an effective form. The world cannot go on, a hydra-headed confusion of sovereignties; it has to concentrate its direction in a World Brain. The organisation of a few thousand workers and the expenditure of a few score million pounds could bring that indispensable organisation into being. And I doubt if it will ever be done.

It would give this rudderless world, as it drifts towards the rocks, a chart-room, a compass, a bridge and steering-gear. . . .

It would change the face of human politics from the aimless stare of dementia to understanding purpose. . . .

To vary the image once more, in China, the greatest, most central and representative human accumulation in the world, the fields are manifestly "white unto harvest" for a comprehensive renewal of civilisation, the whole land aches for it, and there are no reapers; there are only spreading fires, trampling beasts in the corn, and a few weaklings gathering a handful of ears.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>A very convincing and readable picture of China in dissolution is to be found in Miss Nora Waln's *The House of Exile*, and there are also the various effective and well-informed novels of Mrs. Pearl Buck, *The Patriot* for example, and *The Good Earth*. Edgar Mowrer's *Mourner in China* is a convenient little book, compact, full and understanding.

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ONLY VERY BRIEFLY AND, as it were, in parenthesis, is it possible to glance at the future of the black peoples massed in Africa and their kindred in America.

The argument of this book is framed on such a scale that the lives and deaths of scores of millions appear as details of microscopic size in relation to the general ant-hill. Moreover, it has a perspective of its own. It looks from the directive centres of human thought outwardly. Estimates of the population of tropical and southern Africa vary round and about one hundred and fifty million. Probably it is subject to considerable fluctuations. These millions live, hope, desire and suffer. But this great population is so remote from the central intellectual processes of mankind, it contributes so little to these processes, that it counts for far less than the twelve million Jews, from whom, in spite of great handicaps, come men of science, original thinkers, mental workers of all sorts by the thousand. Later, but many decades later, the negro mind may make a steadily increasing contribution to the World Brain. But at present it is held off by such a tangle of difficulties, obstructions and mind-traps as only the rarest and luckiest of natural geniuses may hope to overcome.

In Lord Hailey's *An African Survey* (1938) and in Julian Huxley's *Africa View* (1931) the reader may learn something of that tangle. There, for example, he will find a discussion of the language problem. Is the young negro of genius to begin his learning in some narrow dialect or in such a wider medium as Swahili, which still provides only a very limited literature for his study, or shall he be given as soon as possible the key to contemporary knowledge and thought in English or some other European tongue? And where are the teachers and schools to be found for that? Even if he gets English, will it be good, fresh English? Will he encounter anything better than the faded methods, half a century stale, of a lower type of English school? Will it let him get to anything better than Bible Christianity, the history of England and a nice

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Christmas story or so about holly and robins? Where the negro is apt to become a little ridiculous is in his exaggerated response to white religious teaching. He takes it in good faith and brings out its absurdities. That is not his fault. *Green Pastures* and *Father Divine* are products of white revivalist teaching; they are not native African creations. They smell of the camp meeting and not of the Heart of Darkness. We have no right to call a negro a fool when it is our people who have made a fool of him. Julian Huxley insists very definitely on the desirability of biology and descriptive geography as the backbone of native African education and on the natural interest and aptitude of the African for such studies. There he would be on his own ground. But because the African is ready for the right education, it does not follow that the governments in authority over him are. These poor-white schoolmasters can teach him nothing of the sort, because they knew none of it themselves.

There is a great conflict of testimony about the abilities of black Africa. His bitterest detractors are unable to deny the negro an enviable sense of rhythm, natural good-humour and an instinct for civility, a sense of fun, brilliant mimicry, rich artistic aptitudes. And more than that. In the United States, in spite of the severest handicaps, black men have been able to struggle up to do distinguished scientific and literary work, and in South Africa it has been found necessary to protect skilled white labour from the competition of able coloured people by discriminating against the apprenticing of natives to skilled trades and restricting "certificates of competency" in various mechanical employments to whites. Obviously you cannot put up barriers to protect yourself from the coloured man and at the same time declare that he is incurably your inferior.

The outlook for tropical and sub-tropical negro life in the coming years is dark and indefinite. An adequate education, that would make a large proportion of that population conscious world-citizens, seems improbable, and the utilisation of that great reservoir of ignorant animal vitality as a source of conscript soldiers or conscript labourers is highly probable. It is one of the good marks in the chequered record of British Imperialism that in Nigeria it has stood out against the development of the plantation system and protected the autonomy



of the native cultivator—with the most satisfactory consequences to everyone concerned. But against that one has to set the ideas of white-man-mastery associated with Cecil Rhodes and sustained to-day by General Smuts, which look to an entire and permanent economic, social and political discrimination between the lordly white and his natural serf, the native African. And this in the face of the Zulu and Basuto, the most intelligent and successful of native African peoples. The ethnological fantasies of Nazi Germany find a substantial echo in the resolve of the two and a half million Afrikanders to sustain, from the Cape to Kenya, an axis of white masters (preferably of Dutch origin and speaking Afrikaans) with a special philosophy of great totalitarian possibility called holism, lording it over a subjugated, but much more prolific, black population.

That racial antagonism makes the outlook of South Africa quite different from that of most of the other pseudo-British "democracies". Obviously it is not a democracy at all, and plainly it is heading towards a regime of race terrorism on lines parallel and sympathetic with the Nazi ideal. The Afrikaner will do his best to be a terrific fellow to the last, and he will see to it that the black insurrection gathering under his heel is sufficiently under-educated and sufficiently embittered to behave savagely when its day of opportunity comes. He will always be rather afraid, and his fears will brutalise his treatment of his helots until he is intolerable. Slowly but surely a racial self-consciousness, a collective resentment, is being forced upon the negro, not only in South Africa but throughout the world, and South Africa seems the inevitable theatre for its release.

But the fate of South Africa need not concern us now, beyond the plain probability that whether the Dominion follows the fate of Haiti or San Domingo or whether the sjambok holds its own, it is very unlikely to contribute anything of primary value to the reconstruction of human society upon a planetary scale.

And so, too, we cannot consider here the possible survival or disappearance of that little group of human beings, the Australian black fellows, with their undeniable artistry, their aptitude for mechanical work, and so subtle a sense of form that they invented the boomerang ages before the white man made his first experiments with the much simpler propeller.

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Nor can we bring in that great festoon of interesting and distinctive human societies which hangs across the sub-tropical seas from Singapore in the west throughout the Dutch East Indies and New Guinea to Guam in the east. Sixty million brown and yellow peoples they are, illiterate, unawakened, but for the most part excessively polite and subservient.

The problem of all these coloured peoples is a vast one, but vast as it is, it is still secondary to greater decisions. If the mind of the world can be pulled together so as to give our species a collective rational guidance, this problem will fall into proportion and be solved deliberately and sanely. The coloured man will understand and be understood, he will get his fair chance, so that he will come at last to look the white man in the eye, feeling as equal to him as a musician does to an engineer, with as complete an acceptance of difference and as complete a mutual respect. But if we cannot achieve that intellectual readjustment, then the prospect is fear and more fear, cruelty and more cruelty, trampling suppressions, wild insurrections, massacres and reprisals, atrocities and counter-atrocities, and the ultimate waste of every good possibility in these still largely unbrought reservoirs of human variety.

It is not in their own lands that the destiny of all these people will be determined. It is not on the "illimitable veldt" or in the tropical forest, not in mountain fastnesses or on stormy seas that their hope is to be found. Natural aptitude is not enough. The inherent intellectual quality of a cannibal savage or a coolie labourer, a starving share-cropper or an Abyssinian slave, may be as high or higher than that of a distinguished professor or a brilliant colonial administrator, but the latter is not simply his inherent self; he is that plus an education. The one is like a photographic plate that has been casually exposed to the light, it is an accidental blur; it means little or nothing. The other is a plate that has been exposed in a carefully focussed camera. It means. It is related. The education and habits of behaviour it imposes are the greater part of the civilised man. The better and fuller his education, the better the knowledge organisation of his life, the higher he stands over the bare human being, and the more he and his kind control him and are responsible for human destiny. The only salvation of these threatened millions lies through the patient, incessant ordering of the collective human mind. A

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man working in a study at Harvard or a student sitting, as Marx and Lenin sat in their time, in the Reading Room of the British Museum, may be linking ideas and devising phrases that will open the way of escape for all these menaced and benighted peoples to equal participation in a reconstructed world.

And here is the place to apply the same line of reasoning to that great miscellany of peoples and cultures which is India. They seem destined to play only a secondary and supporting role in any unification of human affairs that is achieved, not by reason of any inherent inferiority, but because they are debarred by their complicated mental barriers and divisions from any collective understanding of modern constructive ideas. These hundreds of millions also I see as people struggling in a net. At present none of their cultural movements displays an original line of its own that amounts even to a slight contribution to world reorganisation. Vague aspirations to an obviously fictitious nationalism of an imitative parliamentary kind, sustained by non-co-operation, preferential trading and the fasts of Mr. Gandhi, point to anything but the coming city of mankind. Starving on the doorsteps of the ruler in the Gandhi fashion is a curiously unfair appeal to the ruler's decency. Directly it is used against anyone tough enough to say "Starve then, and be damned to you," it becomes ineffective.

There would be much to be said for an Indian nationalism based upon the idea of human brotherhood and the common future of mankind. If all these peoples can be fused, the whole world can be fused. But speaking generally Indian nationalism is no sort of synthesis; it is based on a common, understandable resentment at the British Imperial Government and on very little else. You cannot build a nation on a vanishing grievance. The old raj is not going to last for ever, and when it fades out the Hindu will still be wearing his caste marks and the Moslem slaughtering cattle at him in a derisive spirit.

A culture which said "We are ignorant and divided and condemned to a collective sterility by our ignorance, and we mean to reorganise our mental energy and stock our minds to play our proper part in human unity," would be a culture to respect. But even the Brahmo Samaj, most liberal of Indian cultures, does not say that. It is universalist religiously, but it is not acutely educational. In India there are numerous rich men, great industrialists, wealthy maharajas and the like, but it

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has still to dawn upon any of them that a great, growing, liberating mass of knowledge exists in the world beyond the present reach of any Indian, and that there must be scores and hundreds of thousands of fine brains which need only educational emancipation and opportunity, laboratories, colleges, publication facilities, discussion with the rest of the world, to add a continually increasing Indian contribution to the ever-learning, ever-growing World Brain. In India now there must be a score of potential unrealised Royal Societies, so to speak, running about in loin cloths and significant turbans and Gandhi caps and what not, running about at that lowly partisan level, and so running to waste.

The British ruling class has been unable to impose modern ideas upon India for the simple reason that it does not possess them itself. The indebtedness is the other way round. The British picked up the idea of caste from the Brahmins and gave very little in return. And other things they picked up. I do not know if anyone has ever made an estimate of the number of elderly gentlemen who return to Great Britain with gurus in tow, mysterious dodges for breathing down their spinal canals, Yoga and all that. They seem to be quite numerous. Man for man when it comes down to that sort of thing the Hindu is master.

What modernisation may come into Indian thought and life is much more likely to arrive tediously and belatedly from the north as an adapted communist propaganda, a propaganda modified perhaps by contact with whatever modern Western science may have come in by, through and in spite of British influence from the south.

### § 21

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IT IS DIFFICULT TO say whether on the whole dogmatic Communism is to be regarded as a disaster that has happened to the growing discovery of the rational world state or an unavoidable phase in that discovery. In the earlier half of the nineteenth century and especially in the years of recovery from that

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embolism called Napoleon, there was a great bandying about of creative and pseudo-creative ideas, humanisms, varieties of socialisms, hand-specimen Socialist experiments, New Lanarks, Oneidas, Brook Farms. In all of them there was a subconscious feeling that something was still wanting, the ideas were incomplete. Such a phase of the collective mind is very distressful to impatient intelligences. They feel that nothing is being achieved; they want to "fix something and get on with it". At this pace, they feel, we shall get nowhere.

So they get into the ditch.

Apt to the demands of such eager spirits came Marx. He was a man of vast intellectual ambitions, emulous of Darwin and Adam Smith. He seized upon that economic aspect of life which the political revolution had ignored, and he hung on to that. The "capitalist system", which was his misnomer for privately owned capitalism, had to be abolished and then social justice would ensue. He proclaimed the materialistic conception of history and the class war as the only practicable way to social justice.

Neither Adam Smith nor Darwin, with whom he was obviously disposed to put himself in competition, betrayed any sense of finality in his thought nor any ambition for leadership. They contributed and passed on, according to the new scientific morality. But Marx was of a more primitive and more immediately practical type of intelligence. He was for conclusive formulation, for dogma and an energetic revolutionary effort according to that dogma. He evoked a vigorous, rigid-spirited movement for the destruction of "capitalism" by an insurrectionary class war. He had no ideas, and he was probably incapable of producing ideas, about the peace that should succeed victory in the class war. It never entered his head that a powerful new organisation of knowledge and will would be required to direct an emancipated world system. He was, to be plain about it, too lazy-minded. He invented a phantom, more insubstantial than the Holy Ghost, the Proletariat. The ever-blessed Proletariat would see to it all.

The curious may read about that proletariat, and what is and what is not the dictatorship of the proletariat, and when the Party is the dictatorship and when it is not, and how the peasant comes in, in Joseph Stalin's *Leninism*. It is the Athanasian Creed of Socialism.

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But these complications arose later, and at first the Proletariat *sans phrase* sufficed. That the Proletariat would solve everything with the hammer of Thor and the sickle of Rhea Cybele was an all too attractive doctrine for eager minds, and the communist movement, in perfect unision, contemned and despised the intricate and difficult business of foresight as "Utopianism", and scientific criticism as a sinful want of faith. And so at last when Czarism and private ownership of land and capital did collapse in Russia, and that great country was thrown into the hands of the communist leaders, they were totally unprepared with any conceptions of a better organisation of affairs.

The released Russia of October 1917 found itself wildly experimental. It had to reorganise a great community fallen into chaos, and it had only scraps of suggestion of how to set about it. Upon Lenin fell the immense task of rationalising Marxism and getting it to work.

In § 6 the question "What is Democracy?" is asked and answered, and it is shown that the life of a human being can be full and free only if it is politically, economically and mentally liberated; that is to say when it is living in a state of political equality, socialism and universal adequate education. Without that much realisation, liberty, equality and fraternity are mere words. Marx and his Communist Party never fully grasped the third, the educational condition. How to direct? how to keep direction? these were questions they never answered. They filled in the gap in their doctrines with that sprawling, muscular divinity with the hammer and sickle, who is in truth hardly more real than those symbolic Hindu gods with countless arms and extra parts who puzzle the realistic Western mind. Believe in Him, said they.

In practice the Russian Communists were less elusive than their creed. If they fudged a pseudo-God, in order to get on with their revolution, they were still acutely responsive to modern democratic ideas. They set themselves with considerable energy and success to liquidate the illiteracy of the common people, but unfortunately they did not go on with the harder task of educating themselves. They did not realise the need for that. Instead they suppressed disturbing discussion. They are to-day blinkered and boxed-in to an ideology as definitely restricted, within its wider limits, as that of the orthodox Jews,

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the British oligarchy, the Roman Catholic hierarchy or the Chinese patriots we have discussed in preceding sections.

The Russian spectacle for the last twenty years has played an immense part in the thought and imagination of the young everywhere. When everything that can be said has been said against it, it still seems to be ahead of the rest of the world in its progress towards the practical realisation of the complete democratic idea. Whether it will go on and keep that lead is quite another matter, but the improvement not merely in the material circumstances but in the spirit of the common people is beyond dispute. They were servile and now they are proud. They have a wholesome conceit that the world looks to them. That has been done at a price, yet nowhere else has anything been done to compare with it. America also has advanced in its ideas, as we shall note in the next section, but it started far ahead, five centuries ahead, of Russia.

But Russia may have achieved this much progress less by virtue of the Communist Party than in spite of it. The Communist Party did no doubt bring the spirit of revolutionary progress to Russia, but it was not in itself the spirit of revolutionary progress. It might well have been better prepared for the task, and it might have produced men of a finer calibre and greater magnanimity. The darkest shadow on the Russian outlook to-day is its failure to produce a constellation of first-rate men able to evoke its general intelligence and speak for it to the world. Like most countries to-day Russia does not seem to be putting her best men foremost. She does not know how to find them and use them. She goes on being clumsy. Russia is faltering and losing its imaginative appeal. Her inability to deal with her internal difficulties without a series of trials and executions, so presented as to be extraordinarily repugnant to the Western mind, and the open and undignified bickering of Trotsky and Stalin, have done much to rob her of her once almost magical fascination for the undergraduate intelligence. That intelligence is now shocked and puzzled. It may easily stampede in some new direction, and the real greatness of the new Russia may be forgotten altogether in its superficial littleness.

But how intolerable these ardent young communists of the last fifteen years have been! What a rawness they have imparted to social and political discussion, all the world over!

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How unrighteously is the reasonable man tempted to rejoice at this present deflation of noisy, juvenile leftism! It is rare for the normal human being to attain to an adult mental independence before thirty, and it is rare for it to refrain from the vehement expression of opinions after eighteen. Satan finds some mischief still for idle youth to do. Its natural instinct is to rebel against its parents and the parental generation, which has brought it into the world for no end it finds explicable, and, since it is still much too timid intellectually to act alone, its disposition is to go over, lock, stock and barrel, to the organisation in flattest repudiation of the flaccid home atmosphere. The good pagan's daughter goes Catholic and the Catholic's son goes communist. And there they stick. They have made their little act of assertion, but they must still have the comforting feeling of something not themselves, something built up authoritatively, to which they can cling. The boy who runs away from home likes to get on to a ship and give himself up to that. If not, he usually comes home again.

It is one of the primary difficulties of this creature *Homo sapiens* that it grows up, so far as bodily and wilful energy goes, twenty years before its mind has ripened enough for it to think and act alone. The young want to do vigorous and effective things by eighteen, while their mental unripeness obliges them still to seek authority for the things they want to do. They cannot wait. They will respond to nearly anything that lets their energy loose, as a kitten will pursue a cork on a string. There we have the common clue to the storming young Nazi, the Irish patriot, the Spanish Anarchist Syndicalist, the bomb-throwing Zionist, the Shinto militarist, the gangster, the Ku Klux Klansman. They are all forms imposed upon and accepted by that youthful surplus which is the imperative problem of our species, which will overstrain and wreck every social system until its insurgent need to be used is anticipated and satisfied. It has been made clear how this mental exuberance has been allayed in the past by wars and migrations, and why it is that these natural beliefs are no longer sufficient for the magnified destructive forces of the new time.

In the last two decades in Britain there have been three magnetic movements with an unaccountable attraction for unemployed vitality. Fascism, a fourth possibility, was happily made repellantly ridiculous for our sons in the person of Sir



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Oswald Mosley, but the impressionable young men who did not succumb to the God-guided woosh of Buchmanism or the high-toned Anglo-Catholicism of T. S. Eliot, fell very readily to the worship of the heroic Hammer-and-Sickle-God. They joined the Party, surrendered themselves to tasks and disciplines and strategies. They felt they had the revolution and all Russia behind them. How they maddened their serious elders, those undergraduates holding on without thought or question to the Party and being as rude as they knew how to critical liberalism, for all the world like naughty children holding on to nurse's apron strings and putting out their tongues at the grown-up passers-by!

That particular adhesion seems to be drawing to an end after the political and intellectual waste of a generation of silly-gallant young lives. They may have exaggerated the perfection and finality of Soviet Russia. Many have died for that faith. And now at the crowning vindication of Russian solidarity we are becoming perhaps over-critical of the efficiency and foresight of Russia. We forget her handicaps.

There, there has been and there is still a sustained, widespread and honest effort to build up a new social and economic order. It is only necessary to contrast the Russian drive with the relative ineffectiveness of the Kuomintang. In Russia "revolution" still means, for millions of minds, a new human beginning. In no other community is that idea of a new beginning so manifestly at work. It had had to work against bad social traditions and a widespread defensive subtlety and disingenuousness, with a people to whom punctuality and precision were strange ideas. Tchekov lived and died before the war, but his stories are saturated with the distress felt by a man with a modern scientific training at the all too human indiscipline of the land he loved. The Bolsheviks, planless themselves, as we have seen, had to take over that world, shattered, impoverished, chaotic, invaded from every direction, and make a working system of it, some sort of new order, however rough and clumsy, or perish. And they have made a new order, rough and clumsy still perhaps in many aspects, but holding together, really holding together, and not nearly so rough and clumsy as it might have been.

I have visited Russia thrice, in 1914, in 1920 and in 1934, I have had long talks with Lenin and Stalin, I have some

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well-informed and variously orientated Russian friends, and I have read a library-ful of books about Russia, *pro* and *con*. Like most of the world, I was amazed at those strange public trials and the killing-off of, among others a majority of the original revolutionaries. And I think that of all my witnesses, I have learnt most from an American mining engineer, Mr. J. D. Littlepage, who wrote a book called *In Search of Soviet Gold*.

There never was a writer so free from the taint of political prepossessions. He is no sort of *ist* or *crat* at all. But he likes mining to be done properly and shipshape, no fudging, no shirking, no waste, no stealing, no trickery. You have to come down heavily on that sort of thing. He thinks vigorously within *his* blinkers (excellent blinkers) of honesty and high efficiency. And he tells the story of how he was engaged to revive and reorganise the Siberian mines, copper and other minerals as well as gold. He tells pretty convincingly—and it is illuminating—how Stalin was moved to start this revival, and of all the difficulties and complications of the task. At the Littlepage touch the vast, sinister phantoms of Trotskyite conspiracies and organised capitalist sabotage vanish from the scene, the confessions of the accused join the confessions of sorcerers during the witch mania, and we see the human reality of incompetent men trying to cover up the mess they are making of things, of wrongfully-appointed men holding on to their jobs by trick and subterfuge, of hates and jealousies, of elaborate misrepresentations to save the face of groups involved in a common failure, of the manufacture of countervailing evidence, counter-accusations, resort to influence in high quarters. These are the ways of imperfect, inadequately watched men everywhere. The allied generals on the western front during the Great War behaved similarly, though unhappily there was nobody to shoot them. And at the last come the confessions, to put a consistent face on the untellable tale of fudging and muddle-headedness. Better persuade yourself you are a consistent conspirator than a self-protective fumbler, a snake rather than a worm.

Littlepage makes you understand not only the slackness of the country and the disappointing output, but also the perplexity at the head of things, the inability to get sound information and to discriminate between merit and speciousness. The head does not know whom to believe, grows suspicious and incal-

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culable. The impulse of most of us when we cannot hit accurately is to hit hard. The shootings become understandable; take on the quality of necessity. After Littlepage you can re-read the reports of those trials and begin to understand them. The wonder of Russia is that nevertheless so much has been done.

I write with prejudice about communism, but it is not prejudice on its behalf. I have made it clear, I think, how intensely I detest Karl Marx and how greatly my mind has been irritated by the narrowly dogmatic communism of the young. Yet I am forced to a recognition of the real advance Russia has made since the revolution, not merely in material things. Will it go on? What for us is the significance of the new phase into which Russia is now passing?

The mass of the new Russia still seems in its crude way to be revolutionary, in the best, the creative sense of the world. The great raw organism is still moving forward. But there is manifestly something wrong about the head of it. A great number of disillusioned young men in the Western world are saying now that it is Stalin who is to blame and proclaiming themselves Trotskyites. But the matter goes deeper than that. It is not really a personal matter. The organisation at the head of things must be radically wrong to be put out of gear by a mere personal feud. It must be so framed as to eliminate good types of mind and promote mediocrities. Lenin was a first-quality man, Litvinov is a much abler man than the run of diplomatists; apart from that the personalities directing Russian affairs vary from honest ordinary to intricately mean. It is preposterous to suppose that they are the pick of that Russian intelligence which has produced men like Mendeleev, Mechnikov, Pavlov, Pushkin, Maxim Gorky. . . .

The headquarters organisation upon the shoulders of the Russian giant is, to be plain about it, a head without a forehead; it has a brain that lacks anything more than a rudimentary cerebrum. Russia, with an area of over eight million square miles and a gross population of one hundred and sixty-six million people, is being run by a directorate as antique and rudimentary in its nature as some small pronunciamento South American Republic or the tyranny of an ancient Greek city-state. It has no knowledge organisation at all. It has no powers of reflection. It has only the Communist Party—which

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is dogmatic ignorance. It is a giant—I speak of social structure and not of persons—with the head of a newt.

That is the absurd situation of Russia. Only, unhappily, nobody seems to consider it absurd. The country is still living on the mental impetus of Lenin and the democratic socialism of the nineteenth century. When that impetus is spent it will have nothing to fall back upon but the preposterous pretensions of personal government.

It was this absence of a collective cerebrum that made the absurd feud of the Stalinists and the Trotskyites important. Trotsky I never met, but he seems to have had an intensely personal vanity; Stalin I liked when I talked to him; I did not think he had an overwhelming intelligence, but I thought he was honest and strong and human. I was rather disillusioned about him later on by those foolish films of personal propaganda he allowed to be made, *Lenin in October*, for example. Therein Trotsky was elaborately belittled and Stalin made the all-wise hero of the story. He stands over Lenin. Modestly but firmly he indicates the strategic points in the map and tells him what to do. Apparently he is trying to distort the whole history of the revolution for his personal glorification. That was something Lenin never did. He was a man of the new order. Why did Trotsky and Stalin both abuse their record in this way? Could they not understand that even if they are remembered they are—in the busy world ahead—certain to be misjudged? Nobody will have time to read whole books about them. One or other thing awaits these legends they are cherishing. If the world fails to readjust itself now, they will pass, with everything else that is human, into oblivion; and if it does readjust itself to its new occasions, then so far as they are remembered at all, they will be taken in hand by a more adult and motherly Clio and spanked and put in their places.

I was amazed at these egotisms and astonished at the complete inability of the communist rank and file, out of Russia at any rate, to avoid taking sides. Either they took sides or they wandered away from the idea of creative revolution altogether, so completely were they dependent on the behaviour of their Great Men. This is infantile. The man of the new world order, if ever it is to be attained, must learn to go straight on without leaders, just as he must learn to go right on without God.

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revolutions at the end of the eighteenth century, the countries in which, beyond the shadow of the British oligarchy, radical and liberal and democratic ideas have had a maximum freedom of expression. Chief of these, and charged now, it would seem, with the main burthen of their common destiny, is that third great mass of human beings with any sort of solidarity, the United States of America, China, Russia, North America; these vast countries make more than a third and nearly a half of humanity; they occupy most of the north temperate zone, which is the zone of maximum human energy, and with the British Empire they constitute the greater part of mankind. They are all fermenting with change. And the most free-spoken, active, perplexing and various of all these great vats of destiny is the United States.

The United States is of primary significance in world affairs for a number of reasons. In the first place its population is almost entirely literate, that is to say, it can read. How it reads and what it reads is another matter. There are no cheap books in America such as there are in Great Britain and France; most books worth reading can be got in England for sixpence, while in America they cost from ten times as much upwards; and outside a limited world even prosperous people hear very little of any but those best sellers which follow each other like epidemics across the continent. But the newspaper Sunday Supplements and the public libraries largely compensate for these present imperfections of the book supply. So the American public as a whole, over the vast areas it covers, is simultaneously accessible, if need be, to new ideas, and that accessibility is greatly enhanced by the nation-wide distribution of the cinema and the radio. And next it has a tradition of free discussion. The American says what he thinks, and even when he doesn't think he is apt to say it. You can always contradict him, and there is no handicap to help any opinion to win.

Education is in the hands of the forty-eight state governments of the Union, and varies widely in its standards and organisation from state to state; schools, colleges and universities are scattered abundantly over the land; they range from sheer imposture upward, and the best of them are as good as or better than anything else in the world. There are great endowments for education and for educational enterprises. There are probably more highly educated people in the United States than

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in any other single country whatever, and when it comes to what we may call the half-educated, people whose minds, already loosely furnished, could easily be quickened, there is no comparison. In one or two backward states, modern scientific teaching—of evolution, for example—is prohibited in the state schools, and discriminatory obstacles are put in the way of the education of coloured people. These are exceptions to a general freedom. The intellectual possibilities of this vast country are unlikely to be seriously threatened by invasion, extreme war stresses or civil convulsions for some time. They are threatened just enough to stimulate them and prevent their becoming lethargic.

Like all the rest of the world, the Union has felt the impact of the new conditions of human life, the progressive abolition of distance, the immense increase of material power and the ensuing dislocations of economic and social order, but less confusedly and with more time and elbow-room for consideration than any other country. It has been able to look and see; it has been able to think more plainly about the change that has come upon us all. It has only realised in the last decade that it has an accumulating surplus of unemployed.

There is a vast elementariness about the past hundred and fifty years in America. It is as if social and political life in the United States was simplified and made plain for demonstration purposes to all the rest of the world. We have there in South, White and Black; no petty nationalisms, no traditional hatreds, no language difficulties, no localised religions obscure the broad issues. The War of Independence left the country a democracy, democracy at its first stage, the state of political equality and individual liberty. The extension of the democratic idea to include socialism, educational equality and universally accessible information, which we have traced in § 6, scarcely affected America until the close of the nineteenth century. Throughout all that century she worked out the possibilities for good and evil of a hard individualistic democracy. The Civil War, though it arose out of a number of economic and political stresses, simplified out at last to a logical completion of the qualitarian idea by the abolition of slavery and the enfranchisement of the liberated slaves. Life throughout that period resolved itself into a scramble

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for wealth. The whole nation thought dollars, talked dollars. For several generations it was a distinctly exhilarating scramble. There were so much unexploited land, such reserves of natural wealth available, that it was possible to accumulate vast fortunes and still find fresh employment for everyone who chose to work. After the Civil War came a great development and organisation of industry. American invention, American enterprise, soon led the world in the expansion of big business and the mechanisation of life. For a time it was not realised that this march of Triumphant Democracy<sup>1</sup> was essentially the rape of virgin resources that could never be replaced. Triumphant Democracy poured across the continent, destroying the forests and so changing the climate for the worse, ploughing up pasture that presently became sandy desert, exterminating animal species, using up coal, oil, mineral wealth as though there was no end to any of these things.

It was only as the "Wonderful Century" drew to its end that the immensity and the menace of Waste dawned upon people's minds. Everyone was so keen to get dollars that many of them forgot to get children, but the supply of labour for all that vast ploughing-up, cutting-down and tearing-out was sustained by a tremendous immigration. In 1906 a million immigrants poured into America, mostly people who knew no English and had a far lower standard of life than the native worker. They were divided among themselves at first by their special ignorances; they supplied a far more manageable type of labour from the point of view of the exploiting employer.<sup>2</sup> The home-grown strain hoped to save money, get on, escape from employment, and so it was slow to develop any class solidarity until it realised that every door to hopeful competition was being closed upon it. Labour legislation in America therefore fell far behind that of Great Britain. Not only was the immediate real wealth of America being turned to dollars; a rapid deterioration of the common life was also going on. Very reluctantly would America admit that the great uprush was over. Theodore Roosevelt's campaign for Conservation was the first practical recognition in America that Americanism had gone too far.

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Carnegie, *Triumphant Democracy* (1886).

<sup>2</sup> See my *The Future in America* (1906); *Two Studies in Disappointment*.

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This is not a history, but a survey of existing possibilities, and we will say nothing here of the events that exalted and depressed American life for the next third of a century, the War, the boom, the collapse, until we come to that nation-wide realisation of crisis and panic that brought Franklin Roosevelt in as the saviour of a staggering social system.

Sometimes a work of art can do more to present reality than a whole library of reports and statistics, and that tremendous genius, John Steinbeck, in his *Grapes of Wrath* (1939), has given an unforgettable picture of the last stage in that process of material and moral destruction and disillusionment with which the story of sturdy individualism in America concludes. He gives it all, from the exhausted soil dribbling down to dust, to the broken pride, the hopeless revolt and the black despair of the human victims, without rhetoric, without argument, but with an irresistible effect of fundamental truth.

The crisis discovered a great man in Franklin Roosevelt. As I have written elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> he is a "patrician" rather in the vein of Lord Grey and Arthur Balfour than a typical American politician. He is rich and his peculiar health makes him float rather above the level of everyday temptations. He has the boldness of imagination needed to meet the challenges of the time, but he has the great gentleman's disposition to look to subordinates for the detailed execution of his designs. None too soon he has carried America forward to the second stage of democratic realisation. His New Deal involves such collective controls of the national business that it would be absurd to call it anything but socialism were it not for a prejudice lingering on from the old individualist days against that word.

At the beginning there was much talk of the Brain Trust, which he had gathered about him to realise the vast change-over of American affairs he had in hand. I was tremendously excited by this Brain Trust idea, and I went off to America, as my *Experiment in Autobiography* relates, to have a good look at it. He had imagined that the universities could and would give him men of exhaustive knowledge and capacity in sufficient amount to create, on the spur of the moment, a civil service competent to meet the huge demands of this great transition he was so gallantly attempting. These Brain Trusters

<sup>1</sup> *Experiment in Autobiography*, Chapter IX, § 9, and *World Brain, The Fall in America*, 1937.



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were what the universities produced for him. My wits were not quick enough to size them up at once. They seemed to be an extremely interesting and miscellaneous set of men, but I had a feeling from the outset that they were not going to justify the President's expectations. He was under an easy delusion about the American universities. He thought they were untapped reservoirs of wisdom. They are not. They were quite unable to give him the knowledge, understanding and responsive imaginations necessary to convert his magnificent gestures of social and economic reconstruction into a working reality.

I went, a travelling note of interrogation, from him to Stalin, because I realised that the same insufficiency of mental resources and support which was baffling the American President, the lack of any adequate mass and structure of administrative knowledge in the state, must also be crippling the socialist thrust in Russia. Was Russia meeting or attempting to meet that difficulty? In some way of its own? And in Russia I found Gorky in a dream of Russia's greatness, unfolding the plans of non-existent universities to my incredulous eyes, and nothing else but intolerant dogmatists and intriguing commissars.

Both Roosevelt and Stalin were attempting to produce a huge, modern, scientifically organised socialist state, the one out of a warning crisis and the other out of a chaos, and the lack of a brain organisation to give that state consciousness and coherence was a difference not in nature, but degree.

The brain organisation of the United States is not up to its new job. It needs to be revised, expanded, turned round to face the future. I have compared the head structure of the Russian giant to the brain of a newt. To carry on the biological analogy, the knowledge and will structures of the United States seem to be somewhere about the level of a horse. It has a cerebrum all right; it remembers almost too well within a limited range, it shies at shadows, stampedes very readily, and has no particular zeal for learning new things. Something very much better than that is demanded.

For the great, closely-organised human community that socialism contemplates, a World Brain is essential. The third aspect of a complete democracy is a tremendous educational expansion, that not only opens the way to the White House to

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Everyman but gives him the necessary mental equipment, if he can use it, to get there. Such an educational organisation has been latent in America for a century and a half. The fathers of the Republic were not unmindful of it. In every state, land was set aside to supply the endowment for a state university, and sometimes that turned out well, and sometimes it did not. In addition, there were older endowments of the British type, and fresh benefactions expanded these and added to their number. The whole community was concentrated upon that fascinating dollar hunt, but when one of the winners felt public-spirited and generous, it seemed a fine thing to him to get some more knowledge and education for the people. And being essentially a business man, he went and bought the stuff; he bought the best in the market; and it did not occur to him—and why should it?—that America might be in need of something at least as new and distinctive of her as the great business plants and concentrations that he and his fellow-magnates were, with such vivid immediate success and such ultimate bad consequences, making. So that the extensive and complicated university system of America remained essentially European, first upon the British pattern and then with an increasing German influence. To this day it clings to the medieval cap and gown, the degree-giving and medieval lecturing of the old world.

Dollar preoccupation was almost as effective in leaving unchallenged the ascendancy of Europe and European patterns in the world of thought and artistic creation. Boston, which had played a vigorous part in British intellectual life in colonial days, resented this acceptance of inferiority, but until well into the latter quarter of the nineteenth century the European ascendancy was tacitly admitted in the rest of America. Lowell might complain of a "certain air of condescension" in the visiting English of his time. This air of condescension had this much justification that in many strata of the American world it was accepted. There were insurgent spirits and many protests indeed, but the War of Independence only reached the realm of literary criticism towards the turn of the century, and then it came as a great shock to the British writers of my generation, who had taken the American tribute for granted. To-day no young American writer would dream of sedulously imitating or indeed resembling a British model. And in many fields of

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thought, the new history and sociological speculation for example, individual minds broke into distinctive American methods. Some thirty odd years ago the American climate, by way of a protest, killed all the cherished ivy on those red-brick colleges, but it did nothing further in the matter. To this day the shape of the knowledge organisation and education, and particularly of the higher education, remains in precisely the same state of picturesque headlessness and material ineffectiveness as the older, natural-grown European disorder of institutions. The erection of facsimile buildings, Magdalen Tower in Chicago, for example, is merely the extreme expression of this reverential attitude.

The United States, let alone the world, cannot carry on now with an unorganised mentality, a scattered higher education that has no power over the press or the common schools or political consciences. It produces no adequate civil service, no well-informed and easily co-operative administrators. It cannot compass any of the major problems before the nation. The resort of the undergraduate world to the realities of the playing-fields is a sure indication of the unattractiveness of its array of subjects. They yell. Every university has a yell. And well may they yell and go wild and frantic in their stadiums, for their lives and their powers are being largely wasted.

Yet it is in America now that the clearest hope for a beginning of that World Brain resides. A country habituated to the rapid development of vast commercial and industrial enterprises must surely be capable of attending an intellectual and educational enterprise beyond the imagination of men bred in smaller and more tradition-ridden communities. So far it has been impossible to awaken any influential and resourceful people to this patent, if unprecedented, necessity. It is unhappily so novel that they seem afraid to realise how obvious it is and unavoidable. There is no time to lose about it. It is hard to guess what may happen when this abnormal phase of personal government by one inspired, insufficiently able man of genius comes to an end. There is no one to replace him and nothing to replace him. Nothing is being prepared. America may relapse in quite a little time into something as apocalyptic and incalculable as Russia.

And so I return to my refrain: "We need a World Brain," and to my insistence that the creation of a greater mental

superstructure to reorient the mind of the world is an entirely practicable proposal.

At this point I imagine an angry critic interrupts. He has been skimming through this book—he wouldn't deign to read it or mark the course of its argument—looking for occasion for offence. And now he cries: "Who are you, Mr. Know-all, to tell us that all these splendid institutions, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Chicago, Johns Hopkins and a multitude of others, and abroad Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, London, Coimbra, Upsala, Tokio—one could count a thousand galaxies of clustering colleges and dreaming spires—and all these wise and good men, thousands of them, men of eminent learning, men of distinguished character, doctors, teachers, investigators, scholars, not one who is not in every respect a far better man than yourself, that all together they amount to nothing! that this great constellation, this veritable shining skyful of gifts and powers is not sufficient for the needs of the world to day! that altogether it amounts to no more, scale for scale—what did you say?—than the brain of a horse! that it needs something far more powerful, some far vaster embodiment of knowledge and purpose—some queer fad of yours?"

To which I answer: What are they doing now? So far from lighting the world, the skies are so overcast that these starry constellations seem scarcely to be shining.

And far from being "Mr. Know-all", I am helpless ignorance, in a sea of unconscious ignorance. There is one thing, and one thing only, I know that you do not seem to know, and that is this—that neither you nor I know enough, nor know the little that we do know well enough, to meet the needs of the world's occasions. Unless we do something about this ignorance of ours, this universal blinkered ignorance, we shall be overwhelmed, we shall destroy one another.

If only some small fraction of the still considerable wealth and energy of America could be turned not merely to a campaign against the ignorance of others but against its own far more dangerous ignorance; if only this absolute necessity for an organised World Brain, a gigantic but still possible super-university, set above all these admirable but ineffective scattered foundations to utilise and consolidate them, if only that could fire the imagination of a few energetic spirits; then the whole outlook of the human species might still be changed.

## AMERICAN MENTALITY

There is a last possibility to consider in this survey. Some such appeal as I am making may presently gather force, attract a measure, but an insufficient measure, of support and not enough critical attention. The thing may be tried, the effort may be made, and, as people say, it may fall into the wrong hands. Instead of a living World Brain we may have a sham World Brain. The effort may be made. Money may be forthcoming; the demand may grow. Something to look like a world encyclopædic organisation may be brought into being, good enough to pacify most of the clamour, good enough for those people who say you cannot have everything at once—you must have a beginning. When embryonic tissue cannot build an organ it can still produce a cancer. We may have some large and plausible organisation of platitudes, irrelevances and compromises, as adequate as an organisation of knowledge as the old League of Nations was of world peace. There may be great academic comings and goings, ceremonies and solemn consecrations. And at last something in the nature of Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler and President Grover Whalen will appear enthroned, side by side, organisers of the World Brain triumphant, the World Brain of To-morrow, brooding profoundly over the unmitigated destiny of mankind.<sup>1</sup>

That may be. The history of most religions supports this possibility. There is nothing whatever between the stars and the atoms to show why the end of *Homo sapiens* should not be absurd as well as tragic. The price of human salvation is eternal vigilance, incessant fearless criticism and unrestricted wit. How can one tell beforehand whether that price will be forthcoming? Without unrestrained free speech and irreverence, how can we defeat the universal human tendency to be satisfied with and tolerant towards plausible, pretentious things? There can be no rest, no tactful acquiescences, no mental toleration, no enfeebling politeness, in the *kultur-kampf* ahead, if man is to escape the evils that close in upon him.

In the design of this book three primary themes interlace and pursue and develop each other. There is first, that invention and science have completely altered the material environment of human life. Next, that the disruptive driving-force of an excess of bored and unemployed young men, which must in some manner find relief, will probably shatter life

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *The Columbia Encyclopedia*.

## THE OUTLOOK FOR HOMO SAPIENS

altogether under the new conditions. And thirdly, that the existing mental organisation of our species is entirely insufficient to control the present situation, which nevertheless might, with an adequate effort, be controlled. These are the Change of Scale theme, the Youth Pressure theme and the World Brain theme. The first two create the problem to which the third indicates the only possible solution.

About the role of those young men; its cardinal importance is still not recognised plainly by sociologists, historians and writers of contemporary history. In practice, however, it is plainly apprehended, and a very considerable amount of propaganda to capture the imagination of this vital stratum is carried on, and particularly by the more aggressive contemporary states. They pursue their co-nationals abroad, and make strenuous efforts to win over opinion in neutral states and bring local conditions into parallelism with their own. Nazi patterns are being studied in South Africa, for example, and we have noted the Fascist disposition of General Chiang Kai Shek. There is a great totalitarian propaganda, and now, awakening and responding to it, there is counter-propaganda.

On the whole the totalitarians make the more exciting and attractive promises and give the brooding young man the most immediate prospect of authorised masterful activities. Official Great Britain pays the dole and encourages no presumptuous hopes. But in America and elsewhere there is a definitely anti-Fascist organisation called the World Youth Movement. This is a brotherhood and fundamentally a pacifist organisation, a combination of a great number of more specialised associations, which attempts to bring the opinions and demands of the young for security from massacre and for employment, training, adult education, health culture and so forth, to bear upon governing and administrative bodies, and exert a critical, helpful and mediatory influence upon their social welfare work. It has the open support of both the President and his wife, more particularly of Mrs. Roosevelt, and it extends its liaison work into most of the so-called democracies—and Russia. Its activities vary with the country and occasion, but its general objective is to keep its young people busy with work of public importance, developing their capacity with use and experience. This World Youth Movement claims to represent and affect the politico-social activities of a grand total of forty

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million adherents—under the age of thirty. Of these, twelve million are credited to Russia, though I cannot imagine how these figures are checked. It includes also a number of War Resisters whose ideas stop short at a repudiation of war. They will have nothing to do with war, but how human affairs are to be carried on in a warless world they do not trouble to think. Anyone else can bother about that, it seems, not they. They carry passive resistance to the pitch of know-nothingness. With a certain disapproval they offer us their bodies to be protected and their mouths to be fed.

I mention the World Youth Movement here, but I am quite unable to estimate its possibilities. It may fade out. It may play an important and increasing role in the consolidation of a new world order.

The President and Mrs. Roosevelt, though they seem acutely aware that a developing Youth Movement may play an important part in the political drama of to-morrow, have neither of them betrayed any consciousness of the immense intellectual reorientation of which the world is now in such urgent need. Their circumstances have never directed their attention to that. I doubt if these two fine, active minds have ever enquired how it is they know what they know and think as they do. Nor have they ever thought of what they might have been if they had grown up in an entirely different culture. They have the disposition of all politicians the world over to deal only with *made* opinion. They have never enquired how it is that opinion is made.

The only representatives of Youth I have ever met with who seemed to be aware that they were under-educated and improperly educated were some Burmans I met in Rangoon. "We are taught to be clerks in European-owned factories," they complained. "What we want is technical knowledge and the science of our own country and circumstances so as to give us a clear conception of our role in the world. . . ."

Now that was saying something.

### THREE FACTORS IN EVERYONE

that gives him greater comfort. One might write, indeed, not merely the inveterate disposition of the normal man but the inveterate disposition of every normal living thing. For the ordinary animal the loss of the sense of security releases panic, flight, violence—vehement and usually quite unintelligent efforts to recover the confidence that has slipped away. It is only in the human animal, and probably it is only in the last two or three thousand years that there has been any disposition to look forward, even during a fairly prosperous social phase, beyond the prescribed social round, not only to anticipate and arrest danger, but also to enlarge, enrich and alter life. There is a faint uneasiness. "Man looks before and after." For the first time in mental history the quality of reality is shifted from the present or from a past-present system to the future. Already in this book (§ 9) the idea of a rotation of values in time has been developed in reference to European thought in the past half-century and with an auto-vivisection of one particular sample. Now we are able to envisage that forced rotation of the mind as a world phenomenon.

Everywhere we note a natural, retrospective conservatism, and everywhere we have minds reluctantly and inadequately coming about and taking up the constructive challenge of the age. Such are the two main antagonistic trends in the mental life of the world to-day. The third trend goes neither backward nor forward; it is moral abandon. It is equally regardless of the reactionary passive peace desire and of the creative peace impulse. The manifest relapse of the world towards lawless warfare and recklessly destructive violence is due to the successful blocking of the road to the latter peace by the resistance of those who desire the continuance of the former. The deadlock between conservative instinct and creative readjustment releases the suppressed beast, the unqualified egotist in the species, from control. It can only be recalled to discipline for good and all by the complete triumph of the new peace over the old.

This triangular struggle is going on now not only in the human species as a whole but in every intelligent individual among us. It is the essential religious struggle of the time. In every one of us there is the disposition to acquiesce in the dear familiar values, faith, creed, patriotism, culture, amidst which we began. In every one there stirs the protest against a fatuous surrender to things plainly unstable and unsound;



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the protest and the creative desire even at the price of personal loss and injury. Movements come when we feel that we "must speak out". And there is the ever-recalcitrant egotism, which lies in wait for every phase of perplexity, inducing us to abuse every confidence put in us, to snatch the profit and pleasure and personal glorification that offer themselves, so that even leadership turns insensibly into a clamour for precedence, a jealous tyranny and the betrayal of all it set out to serve.

So it is we are all constituted. "Let him who thinketh he stand, take heed lest he fall."

### § 24

#### SUMMARY OF OUR SURVEY

THERE IS NO CREED, no way if living left in the world at all, that really meets the needs of the time.

When we come to look at them coolly and dispassionately, *all* the main religions, patriotic, moral and customary systems in which human beings are sheltering to-day, appear to be in a state of jostling and mutually destructive movement, like the houses and palaces and other buildings of some vast, sprawling city overtaken by a landslide. To the very last moment, in spite of falling rafters and bulging walls, men and women cling to the houses in which they were born and to the ways to which they have grown accustomed. At the most they scuttle into the house opposite or the house next door. They accuse each other of straining the partitions, overtaxing the material; they attack the people over the way for secret mining operations. They cannot believe such stresses can continue. The city is still sound enough, they say, it is not too severely tried. At any pause in the wreckage they say "What did I tell you? It's all over. Now we can feel safe again," and when at last they realise the inevitability and universality of disaster, most of them have become too frantic to entertain the bare possibility of one supreme engineering effort that might yet intercept those seeping waters that have released the whole mountainside to destruction.

Such a salvaging of the species is possible. That is as much as the most hopeful mind can say.

## RESISTANCE TO UTOPIANISM

### § 25

## RESISTANCE TO UTOPIANISM

IN A PREVIOUS SECTION (§ 10) I have given my reasons for and against believing that this creative world peace I have shown to be possible will be achieved in time to save our species from disaster. I fluctuate, I admit, between at the best a cautious and qualified optimism and my persuasion of swiftly advancing, irretrievable disaster. Now let me assemble the probable experiences before our children in the event of such a conclusive frustration of democratic and progressive hope.

This is a much easier task than an attempt to forecast a progressive triumph. Upon that it would be possible to speculate only in the most general terms. What the human intelligence, no longer hag-ridden, released from that abject fear of change that has retrained it through the ages, what the released and implemented creative imagination of thousands of millions of free and happily active individual might achieve, is beyond any anticipating. At the utmost we can produce words, like vacant frames and empty show-cases, to indicate that undelivered wealth. We can talk of unhampered and unhurrying swiftness of realisation, of universal variety, of abundance and balanced beauty. We are forced to take refuge, as St. Paul did when he evaded the greedy materialism of those who demanded a bodily resurrection from him, in "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive". . . .

It is impossible to foretell what the liberated human mind may produce, but at least we can foretell one certain reaction to what is given here. There are those who cling with an obstinate wilfulness to the persuasion that a unified world must be a uniform and stagnating world. It is ridiculous, but they manage to believe it. "Horrible monotony," they say, "stress and servitude. Bolshevik tyranny. Prigs' Paradise," and nothing will dissuade them.<sup>1</sup> Many, I am persuaded, feel an intense jealousy of the possibility of a state of affairs better and happier than their own. It is an intolerable thought for the

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.

## THE OUTLOOK FOR HOMO SAPIENS

greedier sort of mind that there should be any possible life finer than the one they live, a finer life that they will never share and which indeed they would be incapable of sharing. Their reaction to all forecasts and Utopias, possible or impossible, is self-protective hatred. They interrupt; they leap out with "That wouldn't suit *me*". As indeed it would not. How inevitable is that uncomfortable, protesting laugh: "I'm glad *I* shan't have to live in this dreadful, tidied-up, drab, *ordered* world of yours".

The congratulations are mutual. I won't even ask you, Madam, to read in your newspaper between the social and the sporting columns and mark how brightly and swiftly you and your kind drive down towards your destiny.

On the other hand mankind in defeat and decadence involves no great probabilities of mental novelty. There is nothing to alarm your self-complacency in that. It is the world we live in now, only a little farther on and a little more so. We need not speculate outside the traditional, limited, human stuff, that dear old "unchanging human nature" of the past twenty or thirty thousand years. And to that we will now apply ourselves.

### § 26

## DECADENT WORLD

HERE IS A SECTION I wrote in 1939 before the actual declaration of war by Mr. Chamberlain. But it does so completely anticipate the state of affairs to-day that I see no reason to alter a word of it.

It is becoming evident to everyone that the present state of affairs cannot continue. The greater part of mankind is living in the immediate fear of sudden, undeclared war. At any time, by night or day, with less than an hour's notice, the sirens may be screaming and the high explosive and incendiary bombs may be bursting about us. Every other occupation is subordinated to the ill-conceived exigencies of air-raid precautions, and an ever-increasing proportion of our human and material resources is pouring into military preparations. Almost

## DECADENT WORLD

every intelligent human being and every township and community in Eur-Asia is in a state of mental tension which is rapidly approaching the breaking-point. Suicides are increasing. Lucid thinking becomes offensive and intolerable. People attack and persecute one another on flimsy excuses. Because of the limited and distorted idea systems in which they are living, they are, as we have seen in §§ 11 to 22, incapable of setting about the necessary readjustments of relationship. We have dismissed any such outbreak of sanity, therefore, as improbable. There is no basis on which it can start. There will be no world unification, because our species is too distraught and divided for anything of the sort.

What seems much more likely is a catastrophe quite soon, at latest within two or three years' time, a lapse into actual warfare, red war, on a planetary scale. This will not be a clearly conceived war carried out with the intention of establishing a world peace. Governments will pretend it is that, but fundamentally it will be a fit of frantic violence with no rational objective whatever. The first offensive is just as likely to come from the so-called "democratic" as from the "dictator" side. As we have shown quite clearly by an appeal to manifest facts, the three-fold forces making for conflict are to be found busily active in every existing human community—the evil patriotic and religious traditions, the horribly magnified weapons, the relative excess of unemployed young men—but the states where the pressure of these forces, because they were most pent up, has produced its maximum effect in menace and belligerent gestures, will be marked as the aggressor states and loaded with war guilt even before the war begins. They will be assailed by a loose alliance of incongruous countries animated by the diverse motive systems we have scrutinised, and agreed only upon the need of suppressing these desperado nations. The ensuing war is likely to be briefer but far more violently destructive than the previous world war, because while that war began at a level of equipment which permitted a steady increase in the supply of munitions almost to the end when the losers collapsed through material and moral exhaustion, the combatants this time will start from the beginning at something like a maximum of armament, and reach the breaking-point much earlier. Staying power will decide the formal victory, which is less likely to be decisive even than the surrender of the eleventh of Novem-

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ber 1918.

The material and moral destruction of the actual warfare will certainly be enormous. The population stratum of military age will be largely killed, mutilated, poisoned or mentally unbalanced, and after it will come a generation or so which has been more and more under-nourished, under-educated, demoralised and mentally distorted, as the concentration upon preparation (guns for butter) and the actual stress, noise and disorder of the conflict, have made a normal growth impossible for them. Vast resources of power will have been wasted for good and all, and the land and the sea bottom will be littered with smashed-up aeroplanes, shattered tanks, twisted railway-trucks, burnt-out aerodromes and a great abundance of sunken ships and stores. Exoduses of population hardly less frightful than battle routs will have dislocated all sanitary balances, and famine and its follower, pestilence, will have swept the world. Even the influenza epidemic which followed the previous Great War killed more people than were actually slain in battle. This time the sanitary disorganisation will certainly be much greater and the possibilities of morbid infections far more various. Probably there will be a deliberate spraying of disease germs to assist this more natural mischief. There will have been much gratuitous bombing of cities. There will have been a great burning and smashing-up of human habitations which no one will have had energy to replace, and such a destruction of beautiful buildings, works of art and irreplaceable loveliness of all sorts, as will make the feats of the Huns and Vandals seem mere boyish mischief. All that lies plainly ahead. It is difficult to believe it can be averted while its three operating causes remain in full activity.

And when at last one side admits defeat, and peace is proclaimed upon the world battlefield, what will be the situation? The defeated will be treated as the incurably guilty parties. If that were so, if there were incurably malignant peoples, then the wholesome thing to do would be to massacre them carefully and completely. Mankind will balk at that.

Instead of any such biologically conclusive settlement, there will be, once again, a punitive peace. The victors, to the best of their ability, will make the losers pay. The losers will be quite unable to pay. Further punitive measures will then become necessary. Modern war is a very impartial process, and

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the victors will probably have suffered quite as much and even more material and social devastation than the vanquished. They will be in no mind for generosity. No country in the world, even those that have preserved a technical neutrality, alert under arms, will emerge from the storm at anything like the level of civilisation at which it stands to-day. There will be less freedom of speech, less opportunity to speak freely, far more fear and far more danger of frantic mass impulses.

In §§ 11 to 22 there has been an attempt to estimate the general trend of the main idea systems of the world. Here we may recapitulate the conclusions to which that survey points. What is going on now?

A very considerable festering of minds is no doubt occurring. People are reading and thinking feverishly but they are often thinking wrong and with an assisted wrong-headedness. Patriotic and religious teachings surround them, and subtle and insidiously mischievous suggestions. The arts of propaganda in enemy countries improve rapidly. There is no country in the world where enemies are not sowing tares with constantly increasing effectiveness. Every form of discontent is fomented with a skill and energy worthy of a better cause. The suggestions of desperate and destructive revolt that men may fear to whisper to their neighbours will come to them from abroad.

We have seen that the break-up of the British Imperial system in face of a complex of insurrectionary movements, troubles on which the sun will never set, has a high degree of probability. The conflict of the new Nazi religion with Catholicism is plain and open, we have studied it in the ingenuous speculations of Mr. Teeling, and beneath the surface of most of the established systems of to-day some queer development of social dissent is latent. The present ebb of communism is no end to insurrectionary class war. It is muttering vaguely, it may be unorganised and criminal, but it will be none the less socially destructive. We have noted the waning charm of the Italian dictatorship and the lamentable tendency of original sin to emerge as murder and fanatical cruelty under the very shadow of obscurantist Christian teaching. Where Spanish and Portuguese are spoken the pronunciamiento flourishes with undiminished vitality.

America has a transitory unity and stability under the protean aspects of the New Deal, but no one knows what will

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follow when the extremely personal direction of Franklin Roosevelt ceases. There may be a heavily financed drive to put back the New Deal and return to a hard-faced business individualism. Big business has used some rough methods in the past and may resort to still rougher methods again—in an atmosphere that has become much less tolerant of the old forms of firmness. Not without reason do Americans talk of their Bourbons. That once unorganised alien labour has become assimilated and unified and more capable of meeting pseudo-legal violence with extra-legal violence. The country that produced Franklin Roosevelt also produced at the same time Huey Long and an unprecedented regime of gangster terrorism. And in the same period came the revival and the suppression of the intimidations of the Ku Klux Klan. Things have a way of beginning in America, running large and rank, and then coming suddenly to an end. This applies to evil and hopeful things alike. Everything may occur in some part of the United States or another, and the country may still retain an apparent unity. With a strong personality the White House may concentrate the nation, as it were, into one mind; with a less vigorous head that federal unification relaxes and the continental expanse is revealed as a miscellany of divergent issues. War and Roosevelt might impose a temporary national personality upon the United States that would vanish again in a subsequent reaction, giving place to a state of affairs as incoherent and variegated as Europe. The apparent solidarity of the United States may be as personal as any dictatorship; it may be accidental and not essential.

The question of what will come after Roosevelt opens a vista of localised possibilities varying between dull conflict, boss-rule and chaotic violence, and the corresponding question of what will come after Stalin opens up not a vista but darkness. We have weighed up the uncertainties of China and Japan, and there, too, there is no assurance of stability and many intimations of degenerative revolution. A Japanese collapse would probably disintegrate China again, for nothing but patriotism holds China together.

So we have left as the main factors in the settlement after the second world war, a patchwork of staggering governments ruling over a welter of steadily increasing social disorganisation. The settlement after the next world war will be only a prelude to further conflict. Informal warfare will succeed the

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formal struggle. What else can happen? Victors and vanquished will go to pieces and rearrange themselves. There is no body of ideas in existence, no tradition or frame of a world law to which an appeal can be made, that can carry on the shattered, mentally and morally overstrained, but still heavily armed combatants to any sort of world synthesis. The seizures and pronunciamientos that followed the Treaty of Versailles will recur more abundantly and on a more sustained and uncontrollable scale.

Since any new synthesis is improbable, the names of the existing main political systems are likely to continue long after they have lost any real authority, just as the idea of the Empire prevailed among the barbarians in the Dark Ages. The Union Jack, the Swastika, the Cross or the Stars and Stripes may still float over a thousand dissociated gangs and tribes, claiming its authority, just as the Roman Eagle survived as a legally dominating reality in man's imaginations, side by side with the Church, long after Rome was sacked.

Now it may be thought that so much political and social dissolution may mean an ebb of invention and a break-up of the industrial organisations that supply the destructive apparatus which is smashing up the existing order so rapidly and uncontrollably. The human process will go back, it may be fancied, to a mechanically feeble barbarism, and a new system of expanding states may finally reconstruct civilisation. It will be the Dark Ages over again, a planetary instead of a merely European Dark Ages. *Homo sapiens* will be given a second opportunity. There will be a return to primitive home-made weapons, non-mechanical transport, a new age if not of innocence yet of illiteracy, and slow, feeble and less lethal mischiefs will return to the world. But history never repeats itself, ecological processes are irreversible, and there are many considerations that make it improbable that the new barbarism which is coming upon us will have even a material resemblance to the barbarism of sixteen centuries ago. It will be much tougher, with a livelier and wickeder equipment.

Because it is proving impossible to assemble and organise knowledge and sane ideas for the establishment of a world civilisation, it does not follow that knowledge already scattered about the earth will be destroyed. It may become generally inaccessible and secret, but it may continue available in workable



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fragments to a number of enterprising people. A vast store of metallurgical and industrial technique was completely lost with the downfall of the Roman Empire,<sup>1</sup> but then the record of principles and processes was very flimsy and vulnerable. Many technical secrets were never written at all and none were printed. Even down to the past century that sort of thing went on; a number of the processes in Wedgwood's china factory, for example, were transmitted verbally from one worker to another. Some of the older men carried secrets with them to the grave, and an analytical chemist had to be called in and the process laboriously rediscovered before the firm could go on producing its characteristic wares. That was a survival of old-world methods. Under such conditions the old techniques disappeared in a generation or so. But nowadays scientific and technical knowledge is embodied in so huge a number of printed and widely distributed publications, the body of people in contact with those records is so large and varied, that even in a world of deepening and extensive disorder, it will still be possible to assemble knots and groups of men capable of carrying on the production of most of the lethal devices now in use. Postal and railway organisation may go to pieces, newspapers disappear, roads become impassable and gas supply, drainage and public lighting cease, because such things depend upon a widespread social co-operation, and still there may be radio transmission, aeroplanes and high explosives, which do not demand anything like the same general participation.

It does not follow that mechanisms and contrivances will disappear in reverse order to that in which they appeared. It may have taken long years of research and the contribution of thousands of scientific workers to discover an explosive or a poison, but when that has been attained only a recipe and material are needed for its production. It has become a part of "our human heritage".

This is evident for example in the steady increase of bomb-making and bomb-throwing in the world. It is a growing feature of the normal social life. Every morning now we read in our newspapers of the young braves of the Irish Republican Army throwing their cheap but effective bombs in Great Britain, the Jew boys and the Arab boys bomb each other with ever-increasing zeal and bloodier results, bomb out-

<sup>1</sup> Rendered rather vividly in George Gissing's *Veranilda*.

## DECADENT WORLD

rages comment on the new regime in Spain, they multiply in India, in the occupied areas of China. In a world of deepening misunderstandings and grievances, there is no reason to doubt that they will become as common as road accidents and as little thought of, a part of the normal give and take of politics. People will harden their hearts to their consequences until the bomb comes to themselves, and then their enlightenment will be too late.

The world emerging from the next great war, then, will be a tougher world, more disunited than ever, abounding still more in concealed aims and secret preparations and the fears and suspicions they engender. What else can it be? The open forum of the scientific world will have disappeared and the suggestion of any cosmopolitan ideas will have been suppressed, as a weakening of combatant morale. In every country. For the neutral powers, if any remain, will still have had to be mentally as well as materially "prepared". Human beings who can do nothing else to gratify their craving to exercise power, love to suppress and help suppression.

No doubt great numbers of people will have felt the irrational evil of all this shrinking of thought into strategic holes and corners, but they will have had less and less opportunity of getting together, or even clearing up their own minds sufficiently to take effective action. Many of them, under the stress of their conscious helplessness, will lapse into mystical religiosity, will refuse to bear children, will resort to suicide or the quasi-suicide of non-resistance. Many will take refuge in opiates. The Japanese are doing their utmost to spread the use of opium and heroin among the Chinese, and they will probably succeed in affecting their own troops also. The ideas and expedients of birth control, now they have spread about the earth, will not be easily forgotten.

More and more will the world be for the tough, for the secretive, the treacherous and ruthless. Cities will be dangerous labyrinths and the countryside an exposure to attack. Ever and again some group or some individual by luck or cunning may achieve a certain width of conquest and establish a peace of terror. Subservient millions may rejoice then for awhile that at last strong government has come back to the world. They will accept an imposed religion, a last revival of Christianity à la Franco perhaps, or of that "clean" Nazi creed, or

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something on the evangelical lines General Chiang Kai Shek seems to favour; they will observe a dictated morality and a mutual censorship. Any intellectual revival is improbable. This light of free science will have sunken and gone out long since; what remains of technical knowledge will be in the safe hands of properly ordained men. The first thing a youth attracted to mechanical or medical knowledge will do, will be to take orders and put himself under safe direction. History will have shrivelled down to the Creator myth again, but the popular imagination will be titillated and appalled by a dim and dying tradition of a former age, our age, of sinful knowledge, of lawless indulgence, of unconsecrated loves, of a terrible disrespect for customs and taboos and sacrifices and priests, that brought great misfortunes upon mankind. A new "World before the Flood" it will be.

A few secret doubters may exist, bookish, silent, hinting and whispering men—*men*, for a more "wholesome" use of womankind will leave women little time for reading—who will pore guiltily over the unfulfilled promises of a golden age to come, in the old books which men wrote when they still had pride and hope. There may be some wistful whisperings, some weak attempts at a new Freemasonry. But the necessary adaptation of human thought to turn the tide of decadence is something too wide and open in its nature to be brought about by any sort of secret organisation. What can be done by timid men who are forced to squeak and scamper like mice behind the arras?

Art may have an Indian summer. The dictator may even build some fine buildings—for most of them build—monasteries, cathedrals, palaces, before he passes. There may be portrait painting and portrait pieces of an ennobling type, glorified history, an effort at a technically lower level to recall the Venetian bravura of Titian, Tintoretto and Paul Veronese. At any rate we shall not live to see that last Art Age. Then, because there will be no correction for the material stresses of a static system, the darkness will close in again. There will be peasant revolts, an exhausting war or dynastic trouble. So human affairs have gone in the past, and so, without any fundamental change in human mentality, they must continue to go, so long as they go on at all.

The coming barbarism will differ from the former bar-

## DECADENT WORLD

barism by its greater powers of terror, urgency and destruction, and by its greater rapidity of wastage. What other difference can there be without a mental renascence? The average life will be steadily diminishing, health will be deteriorating. The viruses and pestilential germs will resume their experiments in variation, and new blotches and infections will give scope for pious resignation and turn men's hearts again towards a better world beyond the stars. There will be a last crop of saints and devotees. Mankind which began in a cave and behind a wind-break will end in the disease-soaked ruins of a slum. What else can happen? What other turn can destiny take?

If *Homo sapiens* is such a fool that he cannot realise what is before him now and set himself urgently to save the situation while there is still some light, some freedom of thought and speech, some freedom of movement and action left in the world, can there be the slightest hope that in fifty or a hundred years hence, after he has been through two or three generations of accentuated fear, cruelty and relentless individual frustration, with ever-diminishing opportunity of apprehending the real nature of his troubles, he will be collectively any less of a fool? Why should he undergo a magic change when all the forces, within him as without, are plainly set against it?

There is no reason whatever to believe that the order of nature has any greater bias in favour of man than it had in favour of the ichthyosaur or the pterodactyl. In spite of all my disposition to a brave-looking optimism, I perceive that now the universe is bored with him, is turning a hard face to him, and I see him being carried less and less intelligently and more and more rapidly, suffering as every ill-adapted creature must suffer in gross and detail, along the stream of fate to degradation, suffering and death.

That, compactly, is the human outlook, the only possible alternative to the wilful and strenuous adaptation by re-education of our species now—forthwith—that I am urging in this book. Adapt or perish, that is and always has been the implacable law of life for all its children. Either the human imagination, and the human will to live, rises to the plain necessity of our case, and a nascent *Homo sapiens* struggles on to a new, a harder and a happier world dominion, or he blunders down the slopes of failure through a series of unhappy phases, in the wake of all the monster reptiles and beasts that

## THE OUTLOOK FOR HOMO SAPIENS

have flourished and lorded it on the earth before him, to his ultimate extinction. Either life is just beginning for him or it is drawing very rapidly to its close. This is no guess that is put before you, no fantasy; it is a plain and reasoned assembling of known facts in their natural order and relationship. It faces you. Meet it or shirk it, this is the present outlook for mankind.

### § 27

#### CHANGE OF KEY

THE PRECEDING SECTION WAS originally the end of the book *The Fate of Homo Sapiens*, and what follows was a smaller book, *The New World Order*. They have now been brought up to date and amalgamated under the title of *The Outlook for Homo Sapiens*. In the first work I had written what I thought was happening; in the second book I was asked to say what I thought could be done and ought to be done to secure a world peace. But I am not writing mere peace propaganda here. I am stripping down certain general ideas and realities of primary importance to their framework, and so preparing a nucleus of useful knowledge for those who have to go on with this business of making a world peace. I am not persuading people to say "Yes, yes" for a world peace; already we have had far too much abolition of war by making declarations and signing resolutions: everybody wants peace or pretends to want peace, and there is no need to add even a sentence more to the vast volume of such ineffective stuff. I am simply attempting to state the things we *must* do and the price we *must* pay for world peace if we really intend to achieve it.

Until the Great War, the First World War, I did not bother very much about war and peace. Since then I have almost specialised upon this problem. It is not very easy to recall former states of mind out of which, day by day and year by year, one has grown, but I think that in the decades before 1914 not only I but most of my generation—in the British Empire, America, France and indeed throughout most of the civilised world—thought that war was dying out.

It was an agreeable and therefore a readily acceptable idea.

## CHANGE OF KEY

We imagined the Franco-German War of 1870-71 and the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 were the final conflicts between Great Powers, that now there was a Balance of Power sufficiently stable to make further major warfare impracticable. A Triple Alliance faced a Dual Alliance and neither had much reason for attacking the other. We believed war was shrinking to mere expeditionary affairs on the outskirts of our civilisation, a sort of frontier police business. Habits of tolerant intercourse, it seemed, were being strengthened every year that the peace of the Powers remained unbroken.

There was indeed a mild armament race going on ; mild by our present standards of equipment ; the armament industry was a growing and enterprising one ; but we did not see the full implication of that ; we preferred to believe that the increasing general good sense would be strong enough to prevent these multiplying guns from actually going off and hitting anything. And we smiled indulgently at uniforms and parades and army manœuvres. They were the time-honoured toys and regalia of kings and emperors. They were part of the display side of life and would never get to actual destruction and killing. I do not think that exaggerates the easy complacency of, let us say, 1895, forty-five years ago. It was a complacency that lasted with most of us up to 1914. In 1914 hardly anyone in Europe or America below the age of fifty had seen anything of war in his own country.

The world before 1900 seemed to be drifting steadily towards a tacit but practical unification. One could travel without a passport over the larger part of Europe ; the Postal Union delivered one's letters uncensored and safely from Chile to China ; money, based essentially on gold, fluctuated only very slightly ; and the sprawling British Empire still maintained a tradition of free trade, equal treatment and open-handedness to all comers round and about the planet. In the United States you could go for days and never see a military uniform. Compared with to-day that was, upon the surface at any rate, an age of easy-going safety and good humour. Particularly for the North Americans and the Europeans.

But apart from that steady, ominous growth of the armament industry there were other and deeper forces at work that were preparing trouble. The Foreign Offices of the various sovereign states had not forgotten the competitive tradi-

## THE OUTLOOK FOR HOMO SAPIENS

tions of the eighteenth century. The admirals and generals were contemplating with something between hostility and fascination the huger weapons the steel industry was pressing into their hands. Germany did not share the self-complacency of the English-speaking world; she wanted a place in the sun; there was increasing friction about the partition of the raw material regions of Africa; the British suffered from chronic Russophobia with regard to their vast appropriations in the East, and set themselves to nurse Japan into a modernised imperialist power; and also they "remembered Majuba"; the United States were irritated by the disorder of Cuba and felt that the weak, extended Spanish possessions would be all the better for a change of management. So the game of Power Politics went on, but it went on upon the margins of the prevailing peace. There were several wars and changes of boundaries, but they involved no fundamental disturbance of the general civilised life; they did not seem to threaten its broadening tolerations and understandings in any fundamental fashion. Economic stresses and social trouble stirred and muttered beneath the orderly surfaces of political life, but threatened no convulsion. The idea of altogether eliminating war, of clearing what was left of it away, was in the air, but it was free from any sense of urgency. The Hague Tribunal was established and there was a steady dissemination of the conceptions of arbitration and international law. It really seemed to many that the peoples of the earth were settling down in their various territories to a litigious rather than a belligerent order. If there was much social injustice it was being mitigated more and more by a quickening sense of social decency. Acquisitiveness conducted itself with decorum and public-spiritedness was in fashion. Some of it was quite honest public-spiritedness.

In those days, and they are hardly more than half a lifetime behind us, no one thought of any sort of world administration. That patchwork of great Powers and small Powers seemed the most reasonable and practicable method of running the business of mankind. Communications were far too difficult for any sort of centralised world controls. *Around the World in Eighty Days*, when it was published seventy years ago, seemed an extravagant fantasy. It was a world without telephone or radio with nothing swifter than a railway train or more destructive than the earlier types of H.E. shell. They were

## CHANGE OF KEY

marvels. It was far more convenient to administer that world of the Balance of Power in separate national areas and, since there were such limited facilities for peoples to get at one another and do each other mischiefs, there seemed no harm in ardent patriotism and the complete independence of separate sovereign states.

Economic life was largely directed by irresponsible private businesses and private finance which, because of their private ownership, were able to spread out their unifying transactions in a net-work that paid little attention to frontiers and national, racial or religious sentimentality. "Business" was much more of a world comonwealth than the political organisations. There were many people, especially in America, who imagined that "Business" might ultimately unify the world and governments sink into subordination to its network.

Nowadays we can be wise after the event and we can see that below this fair surface of things, disruptive forces were steadily gathering strength. But these disruptive forces played a comparatively small rôle in the world spectacle of half a century ago, when the ideas of that older generation which still dominates our political life and the political education of its successors, were formed. It is from the conflict of those Balance of Power and private enterprise ideas, half a century old, with these ever-growing disruptive forces, that one of the main stresses of our time arises. These ideas worked fairly well in their period and it is still with extreme reluctance that our rulers, teachers, politicians, face the necessity for a profound mental adaptation of their views, methods and interpretations to these disruptive forces that once seemed so negligible and which are now shattering their old order completely.

It was because of this belief in a growing goodwill among nations, because of the general satisfaction with things as they were, that the German declarations of war in 1914 aroused such a storm of indignation throughout the entire comfortable world. It was felt that the German Kaiser had broken the tranquillity of the world club, wantonly and needlessly. The war was fought "against the Hohenzollerns". They were to be expelled from the club, certain punitive fines were to be paid and all would be well. That was the British idea of 1914. This out-of-date war business was then to be cleared up once for all by a mutual guarantee by all the more respectable members of



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the club through a League of Nations. There was no apprehension of any deeper operating causes in that great convulsion on the part of the worthy elder statesmen who made the peace. And so Versailles and its codicils.

For twenty years the disruptive forces have gone on growing beneath the surface of that genteel and shallow settlement, and for twenty years there has been no resolute attack upon the riddles with which their growth confronts us. For all that period the League of Nations has been the opiate of liberal thought in the world.

To-day there is war to get rid of Adolf Hitler, who has now taken the part of the Hohenzollerns in the drama. He too has outraged the Club Rules and he too is to be expelled. There is the same resolute disregard of any more fundamental problem.

Still the minds of our comfortable and influential ruling-class people refuse to accept the plain intimation that their time is over, that the Balance of Power and uncontrolled business methods cannot continue, and that Hitler, like the Hohenzollerns, is a mere offensive pustule on the face of a deeply ailing world. To get rid of him and his Nazis will be no more a cure for the world's ills than scraping will heal measles. The disease will manifest itself in some new eruption. It is the system of nationalist individualism and unco-ordinated enterprise that is the world's disease, and it is the whole system that has to go. It has to be reconditioned down to its foundations or replaced. It cannot hope to "muddle through" amiably, wastefully and dangerously a second time.

World peace means all that much revolution. More and more of us begin to realise that it cannot mean less.

The first thing, therefore, that has to be done in thinking out the primary problems of a world peace is to realise this, that we are living in the end of a definite period of history, the period of the sovereign states. As we used to say in the eighties with ever-increasing truth: "We are in an age of transition". Now we get some measure of the acuteness of the transition. It is a phase of human life which may lead, as I am trying to show, either to a *new way of living* for our species or else to a longer or briefer dègringolade of violence, misery, destruction, death and the extinction of mankind. These are not rhetorical phrases I am using here; I mean exactly what

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I say, the disastrous extinction of mankind.

That is the issue before us. It is no small affair of parlour politics we have to consider. As I write, in this moment, hundreds of thousands of people are being killed, wounded, hunted, tormented, ill-treated, delivered up to the most intolerable and hopeless anxiety and destroyed morally and mentally, and there is nothing in sight at present to arrest this spreading process and prevent its reaching you and yours. It is coming for you and yours now at a great pace. Plainly in so far as we are rational foreseeing creatures there is nothing for any of us now but to make this world peace problem the ruling interest and direction of our lives. If we run away from it it will pursue and get us. We have to face it. We have to solve it or be destroyed by it. It is as urgent and comprehensive as that.

### § 28

## OPEN CONFERENCE

BEFORE WE EXAMINE WHAT I have called so far the "disruptive forces" in the current social order, let me underline one primary necessity for the most outspoken free discussion of the battling organisations and the crumbling institutions amidst which we lead our present uncomfortable and precarious lives. There must be no protection for leaders and organisations from the most searching criticism, on the plea that our country is or may be at war. Or on any pretence. We must talk openly, widely and plainly. The war is incidental; the need for revolutionary reconstruction is fundamental. None of us is clear as yet upon some of the most vital questions before us, we are not lucid enough in our own minds to be ambiguous, and a mumbling tactfulness and indirect half-statements, made with an eye upon some censor, will confuse our thoughts and the thoughts of those with whom we desire understanding, to the complete sterilisation and defeat of every reconstructive effort.

We want to talk and tell exactly what our ideas and feelings are, not only to our fellow citizens, but to our allies, to neutrals and, above all, to the people who are marshalled in arms against us. We want to get the same sincerity from them. Because

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until we have worked out a common basis of ideas with them, peace will be only an uncertain equilibrium while fresh antagonisms develop.

*Concurrently with this war we need a great debate.* We want every possible person in the world to take part in that debate. It is something much more important than the actual warfare. It is intolerable to think of this storm of universal distress leading up to nothing but some "conference" of diplomatists out of touch with the world, with secret sessions, ambiguous "understandings". . . . Not twice surely can that occur. And yet what is happening to prevent its recurring?

It is quite easy to define the reasonable limits of censorship in a belligerent country. It is manifest that the publication of any information likely to be of the slightest use to an enemy must be drastically anticipated and suppressed; not only direct information, for example, but intimations and careless betrayals about the position and movements of ships, troops, camps, depots of munitions, food supplies, and false reports of defeats and victories and coming shortages, anything that may lead to blind panic and hysteria, and so forth and so on. But the matter takes on a different aspect altogether when it comes to statements and suggestions that may affect public opinion in one's own country or abroad, and which may help us towards wholesome and corrective political action.

One of the more unpleasant aspects of a state of war under modern conditions is the appearance of a swarm of individuals, too clever by half, in positions of authority, excited, conceited, prepared to lie, distort and generally humbug people into states of acquiescence, resistance, indignation, vindictiveness, doubt and mental confusion, states of mind supposed to be conducive to a final military victory. These people love to twist and censor facts. It gives them a feeling of power; if they cannot create they can at least prevent and conceal. Particularly they poke themselves in between us and the people with whom we are at war to distort any possible reconciliation. They sit, filled with the wine of their transitory powers, aloof from the fatigues and dangers of conflict, pulling imaginary strings in people's minds.

In Germany popular thought is supposed to be under the control of Herr Dr. Goebbels; in Great Britain we writers have been invited to place ourselves at the disposal of some Ministry

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of Information, that is to say at the disposal of hitherto obscure and unrepresentative individuals, and write under its advice. Officials from the British Council and the Conservative Party Headquarters appear in key positions in this Ministry of Information. That curious and little advertised organisation, the British Council, sends emissaries abroad, writers, well-dressed women and other cultural personages, to lecture charm and win over foreign appreciation for British characteristics, for British scenery, British political virtues and so forth. Somehow this is supposed to help something or other. Quietly, unobtrusively, this has gone on. Maybe these sample British give unauthorised assurances but probably they do little positive harm. But they ought not to be employed at all. Any government propaganda is contrary to the essential spirit of democracy. The expression of opinion and collective thought should be outside the range of government activities altogether. It should be the work of free individuals whose prominence is dependent upon the response and support of the general mind.

It is not only that the Ministries of Information and Propaganda do their level best to divert the limited gifts and energies of such writers, lecturers and talkers as we possess, to the production of disingenuous muck that will muddle the public mind and mislead the enquiring foreigner, but that they show a marked disposition to stifle any free and independent utterances that may seem to traverse their own profound and secret plans for the salvation of mankind.

Everywhere now it is difficult to get adequate, far-reaching publicity for outspoken discussion of the way the world is going, and the political, economic and social forces that carry us along. This is not so much due to deliberate suppression as to the general disorder into which human affairs are dissolving. There is indeed in the Atlantic world hardly a sign as yet of that direct espionage upon opinion that obliterates the mental life of the intelligent Italian, German or subjugated European almost completely; one may still think what one likes, say what one likes and write what one likes, but nevertheless there is already an increasing difficulty in getting bold, unorthodox views heard and read. Newspapers are afraid upon all sorts of minor counts, publishers, with such valiant exceptions as the publishers of this matter, are morbidly discreet; they get Notice D to avoid this or that particular topic; there are obscure boy-

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cotts and trade difficulties hindering the wide diffusion of general ideas in countless ways. I do not mean there is any sort of organised conspiracy to suppress discussion, but I do say that the Press, the publishing and the bookselling organisations in our free countries, provide a very ill-organised and inadequate machinery for the ventilation and distribution of thought.

Publishers publish for nothing but safe profits; it would astound a bookseller to tell him he was part of the world's educational organisation, or a publisher's traveller that he existed for any other purpose than to book maximum orders for best-sellers and earn a record commission—letting the other stuff, the highbrow stuff and all that, go hang. They do not understand that they ought to put public service before gain. They have no inducement to do so and no pride in their function. Theirs is the morale of a profiteering world. Newspapers like to insert brave-looking articles of conventional liberalism, speaking highly of peace and displaying a noble vagueness about its attainment; now we are at war they will publish the fiercest attacks upon the enemy—because such attacks are supposed to keep up the fighting spirit of the country; but any ideas that are really loudly and clearly revolutionary they dare not circulate at all. Under these baffling conditions there is no thorough discussion of the world outlook whatever, anywhere. The democracies are only a shade better than the dictatorships in this respect. It is ridiculous to represent them as realms of light at issue with darkness.

This great debate upon the reconstruction of the world is a thing more important and urgent than the war, and there exist no adequate media for the utterance and criticism and correction of any broad general convictions. There is a certain fruitless and unproductive spluttering of constructive ideas, but there is little sense of sustained enquiry, few real inter-changes, inadequate progress, nothing is settled, nothing is dismissed as unsound and nothing is won permanently. No one seems to hear what anyone else is saying. That is because there is no sense of an audience for these ideologists. There is no effective audience saying rudely and obstinately: "What A. has said, seems important. Will B. and C., instead of bombinating in the void, tell us exactly where and why they differ from A.? And now we have got to the common truth of A., B., C., and D. Here is F. saying something. Will he be so good as to

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correlate what he has to say with A., B., C. and D.?"

But there is no such background of an intelligently observant and critical world audience in evidence. There are a few people here and there reading and thinking in disconnected fragments. This is all the thinking our world is doing in the face of planetary disaster. The universities, bless them! are in uniform or silent.

We need to air our own minds; we need frank exchanges, if we are to achieve any common understanding. We need to work out a clear conception of the world order we would prefer to this present chaos, we need to dissolve or compromise upon our differences so that we may set our faces with assurance towards an attainable world peace. The air is full of the panaceas of half-wits, none listening to the others and most of them trying to silence the others in their impatience. Thousands of fools are ready to write us a complete prescription for our world troubles. Will people never realise their own ignorance and incompletenesses, from which arise this absolute necessity for the plainest statement of the realities of the problem, for the most exhaustive and unsparing examination of differences of opinion, and for the most ruthless canvassing of every possibility, however unpalatable it may seem at first, of the situation?

Before anything else, therefore, in this survey of the way to world peace, I put free speech and vigorous publication. It is the thing best worth fighting for. It is the essence of your personal honour. It is your first duty as a world citizen to do what you can for that. You have not only to resist suppressions, you have to fight your own way out of a fog. If you find your bookseller or newsagent failing to distribute any type of publication whatever—even if you are in entire disagreement with the views of that publication—you should turn the weapon of the boycott upon the offender and find another bookseller or newsagent for everything you read. The would-be world citizen should subscribe also to such an organisation as the National Council for Civil Liberties; he should use any advantage his position may give him to check suppression of free speech; and he should accustom himself to challenge nonsense politely but firmly and say fearlessly and as clearly as possible what is in his mind and to listen as fearlessly to whatever is said to him. So that he may know better either through reassurance or correction. To get together with other people to argue and

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discuss, to think and organise and then implement thought is the first duty of every reasonable man.

This world of ours is going to pieces. It has to be reconstructed and it can only be effectively reconstructed in the light. Only the free, clear, open mind can save us, and these difficulties and obstructions on our line of thought are as evil as children putting obstacles on a railway line or scattering nails on an automobile speed track.

This great world debate must go on, and it must go on now. Now, while the guns are still thudding, is the time for thought. It is incredibly foolish to talk as so many people do of ending the war and *then* having a World Conference to inaugurate a new age. So soon as the fighting stops the real world conference, the live discussion, will stop too. The diplomats and politicians will assemble with an air of profound competence and close the doors upon the outer world and resume—Versailles. While the silenced world gapes and waits upon their mysteries.

### § 29.

## DISRUPTIVE FORCES

AND NOW LET US come to the disruptive forces that have reduced that late-nineteenth-century dream of a powerful world patchwork of more and more civilised states linked by an ever-increasing financial and economic interdependence, to complete incredibility, and so forced upon every intelligent mind the need to work out a new conception of the World that ought to be. *It is supremely important that the nature of these disruptive forces should be clearly understood and kept in mind. To grasp them is to hold the clue to the world's present troubles. To forget about them, even for a moment, is to lose touch with essential reality and drift away into minor issues.*

The first group of these forces is what people are accustomed to speak of as "the abolition of distance" and "the change of scale" in human operations. This "abolition of distance" began rather more than a century ago, and its earlier effects were not disruptive at all. It knit together the spread-

## DISRUPTIVE FORCES

ing United States of America over distances that might otherwise have strained their solidarity to the breaking-point, and it enabled the sprawling British Empire to sustain contacts round the whole planet.

The disruptive influence of the abolition of distance appeared only later. Let us be clear upon its essential significance. For what seemed like endless centuries the swiftest means of locomotion had been the horse on the high-road, the running man, the galley and the uncertain, weather-ruled sailing ship. (There was the Dutchman on skates on his canals, but that was an exceptional culmination of speed and not for general application.) The political, social and imaginative life of man for all those centuries was adapted to these limiting conditions. They determined the distances to which marketable goods could conveniently be sent, the limits to which the ruler could send his orders and his soldiers, the bounds set to getting news, and indeed the whole scale of living. There could be very little real community feeling beyond the range of frequent intercourse.

Human life fell naturally therefore into areas determined by the interplay between these limitations and such natural obstacles as seas and mountains. Such countries as France, England, Egypt, Japan, appeared and re-appeared in history like natural, necessary things, and though there were such larger political efforts as the Roman Empire, they never attained an enduring unity. The Roman Empire held together like wet blotting-paper; it was always falling to pieces. The older Empires, beyond their national nuclei, were mere precarious tribute-levying powers. What I have already called the world patchwork of the great and little Powers, was therefore, under the old horse-and-foot and sailing-ship conditions, almost as much a matter of natural necessity as the sizes of trees and animals.

Within a century all this has been changed and we have still to face up to what that change means for us.

First came steam, the steam-railway, the steamship, and then in a quickening crescendo came the internal combustion engine, electrical traction, the motor car, the motor boat, the aeroplane, the transmission of power from central power stations, the telephone, the radio. I feel apologetic in reciting this well-known story. I do so in order to enforce the state-



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ment that all the areas that were the most convenient and efficient for the old, time-honoured way of living, became more and more conveniently close and narrow for the new needs. This applied to every sort of administrative area, from municipalities and urban districts and the range of distributing businesses, up to sovereign states. They were—and for the most part they still are—too small for the new requirements and far too close together. All over the social layout this tightening-up and squeezing together is an inconvenience, but when it comes to the areas of sovereign states it becomes impossibly dangerous. It becomes an intolerable thing; human life cannot go on with the capitals of most of the civilised countries of the world within an hour's bombing range of their frontiers, behind which attacks can be prepared and secret preparations made without any form of control. And yet we are still tolerant and loyal to arrangements that seek to maintain this state of affairs and treat it as though nothing else were possible.

The present war for and against Hitler and Stalin and Mr. Chamberlain and so forth, does not even touch upon the essential problem of the abolition of distance. It may indeed destroy everything and still settle nothing. If one could wipe out all the issues of the present conflict, we should still be confronted with the essential riddle, which is the abolition of the boundaries of most existing sovereign states and their merger in some larger Pax. We have to do that if any supportable human life is to go on. Treaties and mutual guarantees are not enough. We have surely learnt enough about the value of treaties during the last half-century to realise that. We have, because of the abolition of distance alone, to gather human affairs together under one common war-preventing control.

But this abolition of distance is only one most vivid aspect of the change in the conditions of human life. Interwoven with that is a general change of scale in human operations. The past hundred years has been an age of invention and discovery beyond the achievements of the preceding three millennia. In a book I published ten years ago, *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind*, I tried to summarise the conquest of power and substances that is still going on. There is more power expended in a modern city like Birmingham in a day than we needed to keep the whole of Elizabethan England going for a year; there is more destructive energy in a single tank than

## DISRUPTIVE FORCES

sufficed the army of William I for the conquest of England. Man is able now to produce or destroy on a scale beyond comparison greater than he could before this storm of invention began. And the consequence is the continual further dislocation of the orderly social life of our great-great-grandfathers. No trade, no profession, is exempt. The old social routines and classifications have been, as people say, "knocked silly". There is no sort of occupation, fisheries, farming, textile work, metal work, mining which is not suffering from constant readjustment to new methods and facilities. Our traditions of trade and distribution flounder after these changes. Skilled occupations disappear in the general social liquefaction.

The new power organisations are destroying the forests of the world at headlong speed, ploughing great grazing areas into deserts, exhausting mineral resources, killing off whales, seals and a multitude of rare and beautiful species, destroying the morale of every social type and devastating the planet. The institutions of the private appropriation of land and natural resources generally, and of private enterprise for profit, which did produce a fairly tolerable, stable and "civilised" social life for all but the most impoverished, in Europe, America and the East, for some centuries, have been expanded to a monstrous destructiveness by the new opportunities. The patient, nibbling, enterprising profit-seeker of the past, magnified and equipped now with the huge claws and teeth the change of scale has provided for him, has torn the old economic order to rags. Quite apart from war, our planet is being wasted and disorganised. Yet the process goes on, without any general control, more monstrously destructive even than the continually enhanced terrors of modern warfare.

Now it has to be made clear that these two things, the manifest necessity for some collective world control to eliminate warfare and the less generally admitted necessity for a collective control of the economic and biological life of mankind, are *aspects of one and the same process*. Of the two the disorganisation of the ordinary life which is going on, war or no war, is the graver and least reversible. Both arise out of the abolition of distance and the change of scale, they affect and modify each other, and unless their parallelism and interdependence are recognised, any projects for world federation or anything of the sort are doomed inevitably to frustration.

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That is where the League of Nations broke down completely. It was legal ; it was political. It was devised by an ex-professor of the old-fashioned history assisted by a few politicians. It ignored the vast disorganisation of human life by technical revolutions, big business and modern finance that was going on, of which the Great War itself was scarcely more than a by-product. It was constituted as though nothing of that sort was occurring.

This war storm, due to the continued fragmentation of human government among a patchwork of sovereign states, is only one aspect of the general need for a rational consolidation of human affairs. The independent sovereign state with its perpetual war threat, armed with the resources of modern mechanical frightfulness, is only the most blatant and terrifying aspect of that same want of a coherent general control that makes overgrown, independent, sovereign, private business organisations and combinations socially destructive. We should still be at the mercy of the "Napoleons" of commerce and the "Attilas" of finance, if there was not a gun or a battleship or a tank or a military uniform in the world. We should still be sold up and dispossessed.

Political federation, we have to realise, without a concurrent economic collectivisation, is bound to fail. The task of the peace-maker who really desires peace in a new world involves not merely a political but a profound social revolution, profounder even than the revolution attempted by the Communists in Russia. The Russian Revolution did not so much fail as fall short through the impatience, violence and intolerance of its onset, through lack of foresight and intellectual insufficiency. The cosmopolitan revolution to a world collectivism, which is the only alternative to chaos and degeneration before mankind, has to go much further than the Russian ; it has to be more thorough and better conceived and its achievement demands a much more heroic and more steadfast thrust.

It serves no useful purpose to shut our eyes to the magnitude and intricacy of the task of making the world peace. These are the basic factors of the case.

## CLASS-WAR

### § 30

## CLASS-WAR

HERE IT IS NECESSARY to make a distinction which is far too frequently ignored. Collectivisation means the handling of the common affairs of mankind by a common control responsible to the whole community. It means the suppression of go-as-you-please in social and economic affairs just as much as in international affairs. It means the frank abolition of profit-seeking and of every device by which human beings contrive to be parasitic on their fellow men. It is the practical realisation of the brotherhood of man through a common responsible control. It means all that and it means no more than that.

The necessary nature of that control, the way to attain it and to maintain it, have still to be discussed.

The early forms of socialism were attempts to think out and out try-out collectivist systems. But with the advent of Marxism the larger idea of collectivism became entangled with a smaller one, the perpetual conflict of people in any unregulated social system to get the better of one another. Throughout the ages this has been going on. The rich, the powerful generally, the more intelligent and acquisitive have got away with things, and sweated, oppressed, enslaved, bought and frustrated the less intelligent, the less acquisitive and the unwary. The Haves in every generation have always had the better of the Have-nots, and the Have-nots have always resented the privations of their disadvantage.

So it is and so in the uncollectivised world it has always been. The bitter cry of the expropriated man echoes down the ages from ancient Egypt and the Hebrew prophets, denouncing those who grind the faces of the poor. At times the Have-nots have been so uneducated, so helplessly distributed among their more successful fellows that they have been incapable of social disturbance, but whenever such developments as plantation or factory labour, the accumulation of men in seaport towns, the disbanding of armies, famine and so forth, brought together masses of men at the same disadvantage, their individual resentments flowed together and became a common resentment. The

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miseries underlying human society were revealed. The Haves found themselves assailed by resentful, vindictive revolt.

Let us note that these revolts of the Have-nots throughout the ages have sometimes been very destructive, but that invariably they have failed to make any fundamental change in this old, old story of getting and not getting the upper hand. Sometimes the Have-nots have frightened or otherwise moved the Haves to more decent behaviour. Often the Have-nots have found a Champion who has ridden to power on their wrongs. Then the ricks were burnt or the châteaux. The aristocrats were guillotined and their heads carried on exemplary pikes. Such storms passed and, when they passed, there for all practical purposes was the old order returning again; new people but the old inequalities. Returning inevitably, with only slight variations in appearance and phraseology, under the condition of a non-collective social order.

The point to note is that in the unplanned scramble of human life through the centuries of the horse-and-foot period, these incessantly recurring outbreaks of the losers against the winners have never once produced any permanent amelioration of the common lot, or greatly changed the features of the human community. Not once.

The Have-nots have never produced the intelligence and the ability and the Haves have never produced the conscience, to make a permanent alteration of the rules of the game. Slave revolts, peasant revolts, revolts of the proletariat have always been fits of rage, acute social fevers which have passed. The fact remains that history produces no reason for supposing that the Have-nots, considered as a whole, have available any reserves of directive and administrative capacity and disinterested devotion superior to that of the more successful classes. Morally, intellectually, there is no reason to suppose them better.

Many potentially able people may miss education and opportunity; they may not be inherently inferior but nevertheless they are crippled and incapacitated and kept down. They are not. Many specially gifted people may fail to "make good" in a jostling, competitive, acquisitive world and so fall into poverty and into the baffled, limited ways of living of the non-alty, but they too are exceptions. The idea of a right-ness of the Proletariat ready to take things over is a dream. As the collectivist idea has developed out of the original

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propositions of socialism, the more lucid thinkers have put this age-long bitterness of the Haves and Have-nots into its proper place as part, as the most distressing part, but still only as part, of the vast wastage of human resources that their disorderly exploitation entailed. In the light of current events they have come to realise more and more clearly that the need and possibility of arresting this waste by a world-wide collectivisation is becoming continually more possible and at the same time imperative. They have had no delusions about the education and liberation that is necessary to gain that end. They have been moved less by moral impulses and sentimental pity and so forth, admirable but futile motives, as by the intense intellectual irritation of living in a foolish and destructive system. They are revolutionaries not because the present way of living is a hard and tyrannous way of living, but because it is from top to bottom exasperatingly stupid.

But thrusting athwart the socialist movement towards collectivisation and its research for some competent directive organisation of the world's affairs, came the clumsy initiative of Marxism with its class-war dogma, which has done more to misdirect and sterilise human good will than any other misconception of reality that has ever stultified human effort.

Marx saw the world from a study and through the hazes of a vast ambition. He swam in the current ideologies of his time and so he shared the prevalent socialist drive towards collectivisation. But while his sounder-minded contemporaries were studying means and ends he jumped from a very imperfect understanding of the Trades Union movement in Britain to the wildest generalisations about the social process. He invented and antagonised two phantoms. One was the Capitalist System; the other the Worker.

There never has been anything on earth that could be properly called a Capitalist *System*. What was the matter with his world was manifestly its entire want of system. What the Socialists were feeling their way towards was the discovery and establishment of a world system.

The Haves of our period were and are a fantastic miscellany of people, inheriting or getting their power and influence by the most various means and methods. They had and have nothing of the interbreeding social solidarity even of a feudal aristocracy or an Indian caste. But Marx, looking rather into

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his inner consciousness than at any concrete reality, evolved that monster "System" on his Right. Then over against it, still gazing steadily into that vacuum, he discovered on the Left the proletarians being steadily expropriated and becoming class-conscious. They were just as endlessly various in reality as the people at the top of the scramble; in reality but not in the mind of the Communist seer. There they consolidated rapidly.

So while other men toiled at this gigantic problem of collectivisation, Marx found his almost childish simple recipe. All you had to do was to tell the workers that they were being robbed and enslaved by this wicked "Capitalist System" devised by the "bourgeoisie". They need only "unite"; they had "nothing to lose but their chains". The wicked Capitalist System was to be overthrown, with a certain vindictive liquidation of "capitalists" in general and the "bourgeoisie" in particular, and a millennium would ensue under a purely workers' control, which Lenin later on was to crystallise into a phrase of supra-theological mystery, "the dictatorship of the proletariat". The proletarians need learn nothing, plan nothing; they were right and good by nature; they would just "take over". The infinitely various envies, hatreds and resentments of the Have-nots were to fuse into a mighty creative drive. All virtue resided in them; all evil in those who had bettered them. One good thing there was in this new doctrine of the class war, it inculcated a much needed brotherliness among the workers, but it was balanced by the organisation of class hate. So the great propaganda of the class war, with these monstrous falsifications of manifest fact, went forth. Collectivisation would not so much be organised as appear magically when the incubus of Capitalism and all those irritatingly well-to-do people were lifted off the great Proletarian soul.

Marx was a man incapable in money matters and much bothered by tradesmen's bills. Moreover he cherished absurd pretensions to aristocracy. The consequence was that he romanced about the lovely life of the Middle Ages as if he were another Belloc and concentrated his animus about the "bourgeoisie", whom he made responsible for all those great disruptive forces in human society that we have considered. Lord Bacon, the Marquis of Worcester, Charles the Second and the Royal Society, people like Cavendish and Joule and Watt for example, all became "bourgeoisie" in his inflamed imagination.

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"During its reign of scarce a century", he wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*, "the bourgeoisie has created more powerful, more stupendous forces of production than all preceding generations rolled into one. . . . What earlier generations had the remotest inkling that such productive forces slumbered within the wombs of associated labour?"

"The wombs of associated labour!" (Golly, what a phrase!)<sup>1</sup>. The industrial revolution which was a consequence of the mechanical revolution is treated as the cause of it. Could facts be muddled more completely?

And again: ". . . the bourgeois system is no longer able to cope with the abundance of wealth it creates. How does the bourgeoisie overcome these crises? On the one hand, by the compulsory annihilation of a quantity of the productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets and the more thorough exploitation of old ones. With what results? The results are that the way is paved for more wide-spread and more disastrous crises and that the capacity for averting such crises is lessened.

"The weapons" (*Weapons!* How that sedentary gentleman in his vast beard adored military images!) "with which the bourgeoisie overthrew feudalism are now being turned against the bourgeoisie itself.

"But the bourgeoisie has not only forged the weapons that will slay it; it has also engendered the men who will use these weapons—the modern workers, the proletarians."

And so here they are, hammer and sickle in hand, chest stuck out, proud, magnificent, commanding, in the *Manifesto*. But go and look for them yourself in the streets. Go and look for them in Russia.

Even for 1848 this is not intelligent social analysis. It is the outpouring of a man with a B in his bonnet, the hated Bourgeoisie, a man with a certain vision, uncritical of his own sub-conscious prejudices, but shrewd enough to realise how great a driving force is hate and the inferiority complex. Shrewd enough to use hate and bitter enough to hate. Let anyone read over that Communist Manifesto and consider who might have shared the hate or even have got it all, if Marx had not been the son of a rabbi. Read Jews for Bourgeoisie and the Manifesto is pure Nazi teaching of the 1933-8 vintage.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 31A.



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Stripped down to its core in this fashion, the primary falsity of the Marxist assumption is evident. But it is one of the queer common weaknesses of the human mind to be uncritical of primary assumptions and to smother up any enquiry into their soundness in secondary elaboration, in technicalities and conventional formulæ. Most of our systems of belief rest upon rotten foundations, and generally these foundations are made sacred to preserve them from attack. They become dogmas in a sort of holy of holies. It is shockingly uncivil to say "But that is nonsense". The defenders of all the dogmatic religions fly into rage and indignation when one touches on the absurdity of their foundations. Especially if one laughs. That is blasphemy.

This avoidance of fundamental criticism is one of the greatest dangers to any general human understanding. Marxism is no exception to the universal tendency. The Capitalist System for them has to be a real system, the *Bourgeoisie* an organised conspiracy against the Workers, and every human conflict everywhere has to be an aspect of the Class War, or they cannot talk to you. They will not listen to you until you accept this nonsense. Never once has there been an attempt to answer the plain things I have been saying about them for a third of a century. Anything not in their language flows off their minds like water off a duck's back. Even Lenin—by far the subtlest mind in the Communist story—has not escaped this pitfall, and when I talked to him in Moscow in 1920 he seemed quite unable to realise that the violent conflict going on in Ireland between the Catholic nationalists and the Protestant garrison was not his sacred insurrection of the Proletariat in full blast.

To-day there is quite a number of writers, and among them there are men of science who ought to think better, solemnly elaborating a pseudo-philosophy of science and society upon the deeply buried but entirely nonsensical foundations laid by Marx. Distinguished professors with a solemn delight in their own remarkable ingenuity, lecture and discourse and even produce serious-looking volumes, upon the superiority of Marxist physics and Marxist research, to the unbranded activities of the human mind. One tries not to be rude to them, but it is hard to believe they are not deliberately playing the fool with their brains. Or have they a feeling that revolutionary communism

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is ahead, and are they doing their best to rationalise it with an eye to those red days to come? <sup>1</sup>

Here I cannot pursue in any detail the story of the Rise and Corruption of Marxism in Russia. It confirms in every particular my contention that the class-war idea is an entanglement and perversion of the world drive towards a world collectivism, a wasting disease of cosmopolitan socialism. It has followed in its general outline the common history of every revolt of the Have-nots since history began. Russia in the shadows displayed an immense inefficiency and sank slowly to Russia in the dark. Its galaxy of incompetent foremen, managers, organisers and so forth, developed the most complicated system of self-protection against criticism, they sabotaged one another, they intrigued against one another. You can read the quintessence of the thing in Littlepage's *In Search of Soviet Gold*. And like every other Have-not revolt since the dawn of history, hero worship took possession of the insurgent masses. The inevitable Champion appeared. They escape from the Czar and in twenty years they are worshipping Stalin, originally a fairly honest, unoriginal, ambitious revolutionary, driven to self-defensive cruelty and inflated by flattery to his present quasi-divine autocracy. The cycle completes itself and we see that like every other merely insurrectionary revolution, nothing has changed; a lot of people have been liquidated and a lot of other people have replaced them and Russia seems returning back to the point at which it started, to a patriotic absolutism of incalculable aims. Stalin, I believe, is honest and benevolent in intention, he believes in collectivism simply and plainly, he is under the impression that he is making a good thing of Russia and of the countries within her sphere of influence, and he is self-righteously impatient of criticism or opposition. His successor may not have the same disinterestedness.

But I have written enough to make it clear why we have to dissociate collectivisation altogether from the class war in our minds. Let us waste no more time on the spectacle of the Marxist putting the cart in front of the horse and tying himself up with the harness. We have to put all this proletarian distortion of the case out of our minds and start afresh upon the problem of how to realise the *new and unprecedented possibilities of world collectivisation* that have opened out upon the

<sup>1</sup> See Hogben's *Dangerous Thoughts*.

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world in the past hundred years. That is a new story. An entirely different story.

We human beings are facing gigantic forces that will either destroy our species altogether or lift it to an altogether unprecedented level of power and well-being. These forces have to be controlled or we shall be annihilated. But competently controlled they can abolish toil, they can abolish poverty, they can abolish slavery—by the one sure means of making these things unnecessary. Class-war communism has had its opportunity to realise all this, and it has failed to make good. So far it has only replaced one patriotic Russia by another. Russia, like all the rest of the world, is still facing the problem of the competent government of a collective world system. She has not yet solved it.

The dictatorship of the proletariat has failed us as a final theory. We have to look for possibilities of control in other directions. Are they to be found? I believe they are. It is not that we have to become anti-Bolshevik. We have to go much further along the road that Russia was the first to tread in 1917.

### § 31

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WE HAD BEST NOW examine these huge world-shattering forces more closely, these disruptive forces which are manifestly overstraining and destroying the social and political system in which most of us have been reared. At what particular points in our political and social life are these disruptive forces discovering breaking-points?

Chief among these breaking-points, people are beginning to realise more and more clearly, is the common, half-educated young man.

One particular consequence of this onrush of power and invention in our time is the release of a great flood of human energy in the form of unemployed young people. This is a primary factor of the general political instability.

We have to recognise that humanity is not suffering, as

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most animal species when they suffer seem to do, from hunger or want in any material form. It is threatened not by deficiency but by excess. It is plethoric. It is not lying down to die through physical exhaustion; it is knocking itself to pieces.

Measured by any standards except human contentment and ultimate security, mankind appears to be much wealthier now than in 1918. The quantities of power and material immediately available are much greater. What is called productivity in general is greater. But there is sound reason for supposing that a large part of this increased productivity is really a swifter and more thorough exploitation of irreplaceable capital. It is a process that cannot go on indefinitely. It rises to a maximum and then the feast is over. Natural resources are being exhausted at a great rate, and the increased output goes into war munitions whose purpose is destruction, and into sterile indulgences no better than waste. Man, "heir of the ages", is a demoralised spendthrift, in a state of galloping consumption, living on stimulants.

When we look into the statistics of population, there is irrefutable proof that everywhere we are passing a maximum (see for this Enid Charles's *The Twilight of Parenthood*, or R. R. Kuczynski's *Measurement of Population Growth*) and that a rapid decline is certain not only in Western Europe but throughout the world. There is sound reason for doubting the alleged vast increase of the Russian people (see Souvarine's *Stalin*). Nevertheless, because of the continually increasing efficiency of productive methods, the *relative* pressure of this new unemployed class increases. The "mob" of the twentieth century is quite different from the almost animal "mob" of the eighteenth century. It is a restless sea of dissatisfied young people, of young women who no longer bear children and young men who can find no outlet for their natural urgencies and ambitions, young people quite ready to "make trouble" as soon as they are shown how.

In the technically crude past, the illiterate Have-nots were sweated and overworked. It was easy to find toil to keep them all busy. Such surplus multitudes are wanted no more. Toil is no longer marketable. Machines can toil better and with less resistance.

These frustrated multitudes have been made acutely aware of their own frustration. The gap of their always partly arti-

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ficial disadvantage has been greatly diminished because now they all read. Even for incidental employment it has been necessary to teach them that, and the new reading public thus created has evoked a press and literature of excitement and suggestion. The cinema and the radio dazzle them with spectacles of luxury and unrestricted living. They are not the helpless Hodges and factory fodder of a hundred years ago. They are educated up to what must have been the middle-class level in 1889. They are indeed largely a squeezed-out middle class, restless, impatient and as we shall see extremely dangerous. They have assimilated almost all of the lower strata that were formerly illiterate drudges.

And this modernised excess population has no longer any social humility. It has no belief in the infallible wisdom of its rulers. It sees them too clearly; it knows about them, their waste, vices and weaknesses, with an even exaggerated vividness. It sees no reason for its exclusion from the good things of life by such people. It has lost enough of its inferiority to realise that most of that inferiority is arbitrary and artificial.

You may say that this is a temporary state of affairs, that the fall in population will presently relieve the situation, by getting rid of this surplus of the "not wanted". But it will do nothing of the sort. As population falls, consumption will fall. Industries will still be producing more and more efficiently for a shrinking market and they will be employing fewer and fewer hands. A state of five million people with half a million of useless hands, will be twice as unstable as forty million with two million standing off. So long as the present state of affairs continues, this stratum of perplexed young people "out of it" will increase relatively to the total community.

It is still not realised as clearly as it should be, how much the troubles of the present time are due to this new aspect of the social puzzle. But if you will scrutinise the events of the past half century in the light of this idea, you will see more and more convincingly that it is mainly through this growing mass of unfulfilled desire that the disruptive forces manifest themselves.

The eager and adventurous unemployed young are indeed the shock troops in the destruction of the old social order everywhere. They find guidance in some confident Party or some inspired Champion, who organises them for revolutionary

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or counter-revolutionary ends. It scarcely matters which. They become Communists or they become Fascists, Nazis, the Irish Republican Army, Ku Klux Klansmen and so forth and so on. The essence is the combination of energy, frustration and discontent. What all such movements have in common, is a genuine indignation at the social institutions that have begotten and then cold-shouldered them, a quasi-military organisation and the resolve to seize power for themselves embodied in their leaders. A wise and powerful government would at any cost anticipate and avert these destructive activities by providing various and interesting new employment and the necessary conditions for a satisfyingly successful life for everyone. These young people are life. The rise of the successful leader only puts off the trouble for a time. He seizes power in the name of his movement. And then? When the seizure of power has been effected, he finds himself obliged to keep things going, to create justification for his leadership, exciting enterprises, urgencies.

A leader of vision with adequate technical assistance might conceivably direct much of the human energy he has embodied into creative channels. For example he could rebuild the dirty, inadequate cities of our age, turn the still slovenly country-side into a garden and playground, re-clothe, liberate and stimulate imaginations, until the ideas of creative progress became a habit of mind. But in doing this he will find himself confronted by those who are sustained by the pre-emptions and appropriations of the old order. These relatively well-off people will bargain with him up to the last moment for their money and impede his seizure and utilisation of land and material resources, and he will be further hampered by the fact that in organising his young people he has had to turn their minds and capacities from creative work to systematic violence and militant activities. It is easy to make an unemployed young man into a Fascist or gangster, but it is hard to turn him back to any decent social task. Moreover, the Champion's own leadership was largely due to his conspiratorial and adventurous quality. He is himself unfit for a creative job. He finds himself a fighter at the head of a fighting pack.

And furthermore, unless his country is on the scale of Russia and the United States, whatever he attempts in order to make good his promises of an abundant life, has to be done

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in face of that mutual pressure of the sovereign states due to the abolition of distance and change of scale which we have already considered. He has no elbow-room in which to operate. The resultant of these convergent difficulties is to turn him and his fighting pack relentlessly towards the simplifying, liberating and releasing flux of predatory war.

Everywhere in the world, under varying local circumstances, we see governments primarily concerned with this supreme problem of what to do with these young adults who are unemployable under present conditions. We have to realise that and bear it constantly in mind. It is there in every country. It is the most dangerous and wrong-headed view of the world's situation, to treat the totalitarian countries as differing fundamentally from the rest of the world.

The problem of reabsorbing the unemployable adult is the essential problem in all states. It is the common shape to which all current political dramas reduce. How are we to use up or slake this surplus of human energy? The young are the live core of our species. The generation below sixteen or seventeen has not yet begun to give trouble, and after forty, the ebb of vitality disposes men to accept the lot that has fallen to them.

Franklin Roosevelt and Stalin find themselves in control of vast countries under-developed or so misdeveloped that their main energies go into internal organisation or reorganisation. They do not press against their frontiers, therefore, and they do not threaten war. The Russian annexations in 1939 were precautionary-defensive. But all the same both Russia and America have to cater for that troublesome social stratum quite as much as Europe. The New Deal is plainly an attempt to achieve a working socialism and avert a social collapse in America; it is extraordinarily parallel to the successive "policies" and "Plans" of the Russian experiment. Americans shirk the word "socialism", but what else can one call it?

The British oligarchy, demoralised and slack with the accumulated wealth of a century of advantage, bought off social upheaval for a time by the deliberate and socially demoralising appeasement of the dole. It made no adequate effort to employ or educate these surplus people; it has just pushed the dole at them. It even tried to buy off the leader

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of the Labour Party with a salary of £2000 a year. Whatever we may think of the quality and deeds of the Nazi or Fascist regimes or the follies of their leaders, we must at any rate concede that they attempt, however clumsily, to reconstruct life in a collectivist direction. They are efforts to adjust and construct and so far they are in advance of the British ruling class. The British ruling class has shown itself the least constructive of all governing networks. It produces no New Deals, no Five Year Plans; it keeps on trying to stave off its inevitable dissolution and carry on upon the old lines—and apparently it will do that until it has nothing more to give away.

"Peace in our time", that foolishly premature self-congratulation of Mr. Chamberlain, was manifestly the guiding principal of the British elder statesmen. It is that natural desire we all begin to feel after sixty to sit down comfortably somewhere. Unprogressive tranquillity they wanted at any price, even at the price of a preventive war. This astonishing bunch of rulers never revealed any conception whatever of a common future before its sprawling Empire. There was a time when that Empire seemed likely to become the nexus of a world system, but now manifestly it has no future but dissolution in that wider unity. Apparently its rulers expected it to go on just as it was for ever. Bit by bit its component parts have dropped away and become quasi-independent powers, generally after an unedifying struggle; Southern Ireland for example is neutral in the present war, South Africa hesitated.

These people, by a string of almost incredible blunders, entangled what was left of their Empire in a great war to "end Hitler", and they have absolutely no suggestion to offer the world at large of what is to come after Hitler. Apparently they hope to paralyse Germany in some as yet unspecified fashion and then to go back to their golf links or the fishing stream and the doze by the fire after dinner. That is surely one of the most astounding things in history, the possibility of death and destruction beyond all reckoning and a ruling class which still seems to lack any idea of what is to follow when the overthrow of Hitler is accomplished. It seems to be as void of any sense of the future, as completely empty-headed about the aftermath of its campaigns, as one of those American Tories who are "just out against F.D.R. Damn him!"

Even to-day after more than two years of steadily intensify-



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ing warfare, with Russia as their ally, and with no prospect of a conclusive end to this conflict except a European Revolution, these stupid influences in high places still cling to the idiot policy of sustaining Franco, still dream of a Catholic Germany under the rule of a German-trained Pope, still persist in straining the unity of the English-speaking peoples towards a social conflict. So English-speaking Toryism digs its own grave, leaving intelligent English people to line up at last with Russia, Left China, and the rest of the intelligent world and face the universal problem. Which is: how are we to adapt ourselves to these mighty disruptive forces that are shattering human society as it is at present constituted?

In the compressed countries which have little internal scope and lack the vast natural resources of the Russian and Atlantic communities, the internal tension makes more directly for aggressive warfare, but the fundamental driving-force behind their aggressiveness is still the universal trouble, that surplus of young men.

Seen in this broader vision, the present war falls into its true proportions as a stupid conflict upon secondary issues, which is delaying and preventing an overdue world adjustment. That it may kill millions of people does not alter that. An idiot with a revolver can murder a family. He remains an idiot.

From 1914 to 1939 was a quarter of a century of folly, meanness, evasion and resentment, and only a very tedious and copious historian would attempt to distribute the blame among those who had played a part in the story. And when he had done it, what he had done would not matter in the least. An almost overwhelmingly difficult problem confronted us all, and we lost our heads in the face of it, lost our dignity, were too clever by half, pinned ourselves to cheap solutions, quarrelled stupidly among ourselves. "We have erred and strayed. . . . We have left undone those things that we ought to have done and we have done those things which we ought not to have done and there is no health in us."

I do not see any way to a solution of the problem of World Peace unless we begin with a confession of universal wrong-thinking and wrong-doing. Then we can sit down to the question of a solution with some reasonable prospect of finding an answer.

Now let us assume that "we" are a number of intelligent

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men, German, French, English, American, Italian, Chinese and so forth, who have decided in consequence of the war and in spite of the war, while the war is still going on, to wipe out all these squabbling by-gones from our minds, and discuss plainly and simply the present situation of mankind. What is to be done with the world? Let us recapitulate the considerations that so far have been brought into the case and then examine where they lead us, what other general considerations can be brought in, and what prospects they open, if any, of some hopeful concerted action, action that would so revolutionise the human outlook as to end war, and that hectic recurrent waste of human life and happiness, for ever.

Firstly then it has been made apparent that humanity is at the end of an age, an age of fragmentation in the management of its affairs, fragmentation politically among separate sovereign states and economically among unrestricted business organisations competing for profit. The abolition of distance, the enormous increase of available power, root causes of all our troubles, have suddenly made what was once a tolerable working system—a system that was perhaps with all its inequalities and injustices the only practicable working system in its time—enormously dangerous and wasteful, so that it threatens to exhaust and destroy our world altogether. Man is like a feckless heir who has suddenly been able to get at his capital and spend it as though it were income. We are living in a phase of violent and irreparable expenditure. There is an intensified scramble among nations and among individuals to acquire, monopolise and spend. The dispossessed young find themselves hopeless unless they resort to violence. They implement the ever-increasing instability. Only a comprehensive collectivisation of human affairs can arrest this disorderly self-destruction of mankind. All this has been made plain in what has gone before.

This essential problem, the problem of collectivisation, can be viewed from two reciprocal points of view and stated in two different ways. We can ask, "What is to be done to end the world chaos?" and also "How can we offer the common young man a reasonable and stimulating prospect of a full life?"

These two questions are the obverse and reverse of one question. What answers one answers the other. The answer

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to both is that we have to collectivise the world as one system with practically everyone playing a reasonably satisfying part in it. For sound practical reasons, over and above any ethical or sentimental considerations, we have to devise a collectivisation that neither degrades nor enslaves.

Our imaginary world conference then has to turn itself to the question of how to collectivise the world, so that it will remain collectivised and yet enterprising, interesting and happy enough to content that common young man who will otherwise reappear, baffled and sullen, at the street corners and throw it into confusion again. To that problem the rest of this book will address itself.

As a matter of fact it is very obvious that at the present time a sort of collectivisation is being imposed very rapidly upon the world. Everyone is being enrolled, ordered about, put under control somewhere—even if it is only in an evacuation or concentration camp or what not. This process of collectivisation, collectivisation of some sort, seems now to be in the nature of things and there is no reason to suppose it is reversible. Some people imagine world peace as the end of that process. Collectivisation is going to be defeated and a vaguely conceived reign of law will restore and sustain property, Christianity, individualism and everything to which the respectable prosperous are accustomed. This is implicit even in the title of such a book as Edward Mousley's *Man or Leviathan*? It is much more reasonable to think that world peace has to be the necessary completion of that process, and that the alternative is a decadent anarchy. If so, the phrase for the aims of liberal thought should be not *Man or Leviathan* but *Man rides Leviathan*.

On this point, the inevitability of collectivisation as the sole alternative to universal brigandage and social collapse, our world conference must make itself perfectly clear. Then it has to turn itself to the much more difficult and complicated question of *how*.

## SOCIALISM UNAVOIDABLE

### § 32

## SOCIALISM UNAVOIDABLE

LET US, EVEN AT the cost of a certain repetition, look a little more closely now into the fashion in which the disruptive forces are manifesting themselves in the Western and Eastern hemispheres.

In the Old World the hypertrophy of armies is most conspicuous, in America it was the hypertrophy of big business. But in both the necessity for an increasing collective restraint upon unco-ordinated over-powerful business or political enterprise is more and more clearly recognised.

There is a strong opposition on the part of great interests in America to the President, who has made himself the spear-head of the collectivising drive; they want to put the brake now on his progressive socialisation of the nation, and quite possibly, at the cost of increasing social friction, they may slow down the drift to socialism very considerably. But it is unbelievable that they dare provoke the social convulsion that would ensue upon a deliberate reversal of the engines or upon any attempt to return to the glorious days of big business, wild speculation and mounting unemployment before 1927. They will merely slow down the drive. For in the world now all roads lead to socialism or social dissolution.

The tempo of the process is different in the two continents; that is the main difference between them. It is not an opposition. They travel at different rates but they travel towards an identical goal. In the Old World at present the socialisation of the community is going on far more rapidly and thoroughly than it is in America because of the perpetual war threat.

In Western Europe now the dissolution and the drive towards socialisation progress by leaps and bounds. The British governing class and British politicians generally, overtaken by a war they had not the intelligence to avert, have tried to atone for their slovenly unimaginativeness during the past twenty years in a passion of witless improvisation. God knows what their actual war preparations amount to, but their domestic policy seems to be based on an imperfect study of

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Barcelona, Guernica, Madrid and Warsaw. They imagine similar catastrophes on a larger scale—although they are quite impossible, as every steady-headed person who can estimate the available supplies of petrol knows—and they have a terrible dread of being held responsible. They fear a day of reckoning with their long-bamboozled lower classes. In their panic they are rapidly breaking up the existing order altogether.

The changes that occurred in Great Britain in less than a year were astounding. They recall in many particulars the social dislocation of Russia in the closing months of 1917. There has been a shifting and mixing-up of people that would have seemed impossible to anyone in 1937. The evacuation of the centres of population under mere exaggerated threats of air raids was carried out by the authorities in a mood of frantic recklessness. Hundreds of thousands of families were broken up, children separated from their parents and quartered in the homes of more or less reluctant hosts. Parasites and skin diseases, vicious habits and insanitary practices spread, as if in a passion of equalitarian propaganda, from the slums of such centres as Glasgow, London and Liverpool, throughout the length and breadth of the land. Railways, road traffic, all the normal communications were dislocated by a universal running about. For a couple of months Great Britain was more like a disturbed ant-hill than an organised civilised country.

The contagion of funk affected everyone. Public institutions and great business concerns bolted to remote and inconvenient sites; the B.B.C. organisation, for example, scuttled off headlong from London, needlessly and ridiculously, no man pursuing it. There was a wild epidemic of dismissals, of servants employed in London, for example, and a still wilder shifting of unsuitable men to novel, unnecessary jobs. Everyone has been exhorted to serve the country, children of twelve, to the great delight of conservative-minded farmers, have been withdrawn from school and put to work on the land, and yet the number of those who have lost their jobs and could not find anything else to do, went up by over 100,000.

There have been amateurish attempts to ration food, producing waste here and artificial scarcity there. A sort of massacre of small independent businesses began mainly to the advantage of the big provision-dealing concerns, which changed in a night from open profiteers to become the "expert" advisers of

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food supply. All the expertise they had ever displayed had been the extraction of profits from food supply. But while profits mounted, taxation with an air of great resolution set itself to prune them.

The British public has always been phlegmatic in the face of danger, it is too stout-hearted and too stupid to give way to excesses of fear, but the authorities thought it necessary to plaster the walls with vast, manifestly expensive, posters, headed with a Royal Crown. "*Your courage, your resolution, your cheerfulness will bring us victory.*"

"Oh yus," said the London Cockney. "*You'll get the victory all right. Trust you. On my courage, my resolution, my cheerfulness; you'll use up 'Tommy Atkins' all right. Larf at 'im in a kindly sort of way and use him. And then you think you'll put him back again on the dust-heap. Again? Twice?*"

That is all too credible. But this time our rulers will emerge discredited and frustrated from the conflict to face a disorganised population in a state of mutinous enquiry. They have made preposterous promises to restore Poland and they will certainly have to eat their words about that. Or what is more probable the government will have to give place to another administration which will be able to eat those words for them with a slightly better grace. There is little prospect of Thanksgiving Services or any Armistice night orgy this time. People at home are tasting the hardships of war even more tediously and irritatingly than the men on active service. Cinemas, theatres, have been shut prematurely, black-outs have diminished the safety of the streets and doubled the tale of road casualties. The British crowd is already a sullen crowd. The world has not seen it in such a bad temper for a century and a half, and, let there be no mistake about it, it is far less in a temper with the Germans than it is with its own rulers.

Through all this swirling intimidating propaganda of civil disorder and a systematic suppression of news and criticism of the most exasperating sort, war preparation has proceeded. The perplexed and baffled citizen can only hope that on the military side there has been a little more foresight and less hysteria.

The loss of confidence and particularly confidence in the government and social order is already enormous. No one feels.

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secure, in his job, in his services, in his savings, any longer. People lose confidence even in the money in their pockets. And human society is built on confidence. It cannot carry on without it.

The position of the ruling class and the financial people who have hitherto dominated British affairs is a peculiar one. The cost of the war is already enormous, and there is no sign that it will diminish. Income tax, super tax, death duties, taxes on war profits have been raised to a level that should practically extinguish the once prosperous middle strata of society altogether. The very wealthy will survive in a shorn and diminished state, they will hang on to the last, but the graded classes that have hitherto intervened between them and the impoverished masses of the population, who will be irritated by war sacrifices, extensively unemployed and asking more and more penetrating questions, will have diminished greatly. Only by the most ingenious monetary manipulation, by dangerous tax-dodging and expedients verging on sheer scoundrelism, will a clever young man have the ghost of a chance of climbing, by the old traditional money-making ladder, above his fellows. On the other hand, the career of a public employee will become continually more attractive. There is more interest in it and more self-respect. The longer the war continues, the completer and more plainly irreparable will be the dissolution of the old order.

Now to many readers who have been incredulous of the statement made in Section 27 of this book, that we are living in the End of an Age, to those who have been impervious to the account of the disruptive forces that are breaking up the social order and to the argument I have drawn from them, who may have got away from all that, so to speak, by saying they are "scientific" or "materialistic" or "sociological" or "high-brow", or that the Providence that has hitherto displayed such a marked bias in favour of well-off, comfortable, sluggish-minded people is sure to do something nice for them at the eleventh hour, the real inconveniences, alarms, losses and growing disorder of the life about them may at last bring a realisation that the situation in Western Europe is approaching revolutionary conditions. It will be a hard saying for many people in the advantage-holding classes, and particularly if they are middle-aged, that the old order has already gone to pieces and

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can never be put back. But how can they doubt it?

A revolution, that is to say a more or less convulsive effort at social and political readjustment, is bound to come in all these overstrained countries, in Germany, in Britain and universally. It is a necessary and inevitable relief. It is more likely than not to arise directly out of the exasperating diminuendos and crescendos of the present war, as a culminating phase of it. Revolution of some sort we must have. We cannot prevent its onset. But we can affect the course of its development. It may end in utter disaster or it may release a new world, far better than the old. Within these broad limits it is possible for us to make up our minds *how* it will come to us.

And since the only practical question before us is the question of *how* we will take this world revolution we cannot possibly evade, let me recall to your attention the reasons I have advanced for the utmost public discussion of our situation at the present time. And also let me bring back to mind the examination I have made of Marxism. There it is shown how easily a collectivist movement, especially when it is faced by the forcible-feeble resistances and suppressions of those who have hitherto enjoyed wealth and power, may degenerate into an old-fashioned class-war, become conspiratorial, dogmatic and in-adaptable, and sink towards leader worship and autocracy. We have to head that off. We have to produce a Western Revolution, which will benefit by the Russian experience, react upon Russia and lead ultimately to a common understanding.

What is it that the Atlantic world finds most objectionable in the Soviet world of to-day? Is it any disapproval of collectivism as such? Only in the case of a dwindling minority of rich and successful men—and very rarely of the sons of such people. Very few capable men under fifty nowadays remain individualists in political and social matters. They are not even fundamentally anti-Communist. It happens that for various reasons the political life of the community is still in the hands of unteachable old-fashioned people. What are called "democracies" suffer greatly from the rule of old men who have not kept pace with the times. The real and effective disapproval, distrust and disbelief in the soundness of the Soviet system lies not in the out-of-date individualism of these elderly types, but in the conviction that it can never achieve efficiency or even maintain its honest ideal of each for all and all for each, unless



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it has free speech and an insistence upon legally-defined freedoms for the individual within the collectivist framework. We do not deplore the Russian Revolution as a Revolution. We complain that it was not a good enough Revolution and we want a better one.

The more highly things are collectivised the more necessary is a legal system embodying the Rights of Man. This was forgotten under the Soviets, and so men went in fear there of arbitrary police action. *But the more functions your government controls the more need there is for protective law.* The objection to Soviet collectivism is that, lacking the antiseptic of legally assured personal freedom, it will not *keep*. It professes to be fundamentally a common economic system based on class-war ideas; the industrial director is under the heel of the Party commissar; the political police have got altogether out of hand; and affairs gravitate inevitably towards an oligarchy or an autocracy protecting its incapacity by the repression of adverse comment.

But these valid criticisms merely indicate the sort of collectivisation that has to be avoided. It does not dispose of collectivism as such. If we in our turn do not wish to be submerged by the wave of Bolshevisation that is evidently advancing from the East, we must implement all these valid objections and create a collectivisation that will be more efficient, more prosperous, tolerant, free and rapidly progressive than the system we condemn. We, who do not like the Stalinised-Marxist state, have, as they used to say in British politics, to "dish" it by going one better. We have to confront Eastern-spirited collectivism with Western-spirited collectivism.

Perhaps this may be better put. We may be giving way to a sub-conscious conceit here and assuming that the West is always going to be thinking more freely and clearly and working more efficiently than the East. It is like that now, but it may not always be like that. Every country has had its phases of illumination and its phases of blindness. Stalinism is neither the beginning nor the end of the collectivisation of Russia.

We are dealing with something still almost impossible to estimate, the extent to which the new Russian patriotism and the new Stalin-worship have effaced and how far they have merely masked the genuinely creative international communism of the revolutionary years. The Russian mind is not a docile

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mind, and most of the literature available for a young man to read in Russia, we must remember, is still revolutionary. There has been no burning of the books there. The Moscow radio talks for internal consumption after the Hitler-Stalin understanding betrayed a great solicitude on the part of the government to make it clear that there has been no sacrifice of revolutionary principle. That witnesses to the vitality of public opinion in Russia. The clash between the teachings of 1920 and 1941 may have a liberating effect on many people's minds. Russians love to talk about ideas. Under the Czar they talked. It is incredible that they do not talk under Stalin.

That question whether collectivisation is to be "Westernised" or "Easternised", using these words under the caveat of the previous paragraph, is really the first issue before the world to-day. We need a fully ventilated Revolution. Our Revolution has to go on in the light and air. We may have to accept sovietisation *à la Russe* quite soon unless we can produce a better collectivisation. But if we produce a better collectivisation it is more probable than not that the Russian system will incorporate our improvements, forget its reviving nationalism again, and merge into the one world state.

Between these primary antagonists, between Revolution with its eyes open and Revolution with a mask and a gag, there will certainly be complications of the issue due to patriotism and bigotry and the unteachable wilful blindness of those who do not want to see. Most people lie a lot to themselves before they lie to other people, and it is hopeless to expect that all the warring cults and traditions that confuse the mind of the race to-day are going to fuse under a realisation of the imperative nature of the human situation as I have stated it here. Multitudes will never realise it. Few human beings are able to change their primary ideas after the middle thirties. They get fixed in them and drive before them no more intelligently than animals drive before their innate impulses. They will die rather than change their second selves.

One of the most entangling of these disconcerting secondary issues is that created by the stupid and persistent intrigues of the Roman Catholic Church.

Let me be clear here. I am speaking of the Vatican and of its sustained attempts to exercise a directive rôle in secular life. I number among my friends many Roman Catholics who

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have built the most charming personalities and behaviour systems on the framework provided them by their faith. One of the loveliest characters I have ever known was G. K. Chesterton. But I think he was just as fine before he became a Catholic as afterwards. Still he found something he needed in Catholicism. There are saints of all creeds and of none, so good are the better possibilities of human nature. Religious observances provide a frame that many find indispensable for the seemingly ordering of their lives. And outside the ranks of "strict" observers many good people with hardly more theology than a Unitarian love to speak of goodness and kindness as Christianity. So-and-so is a "good Christian". Voltaire, says Alfred Noyes, the Catholic writer, was a "good Christian". I do not use the word "Christianity" in that sense because I do not believe that Christians have any monopoly of goodness. When I write of Christianity, I mean Christianity with a definite creed and militant organisation and not these good kind people, good and kind but not very fastidious about the exact use of words.

Such "good Christians" can be almost as bitterly critical as I am of the continual pressure upon the faithful by that inner group of Italians in Rome, subsidised by the Fascist government, who pull the strings of Church policy throughout the world, so as to do this or that tortuous or uncivilised thing, to cripple education, to persecute unorthodox ways of living.

It is to the influence of the Church that we must ascribe the foolish support by the British Foreign Office of Franco, that murderous little "Christian gentleman", in his overthrow of the staggering liberal renaissance of Spain. It is the Roman Catholic influence the British and French have to thank for the untastic blundering that involved them in the defence of the impossible Polish state and its unrighteous acquisitions; it affected British policy in respect to Austria and Czechoslovakia profoundly, and it did its utmost to maintain and develop a litical estrangement between Russia and the Western world its prejudiced exacerbation of the idea that Russia is "anti-d" while we Westerners are little children of the light, antly fighting on the side of the Cross, Omnipotence, Greater and, national sovereignty, the small uneconomic prolific ner and shopkeeper and anything else you like to imagine titutés "Christendom".

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The Vatican has striven perpetually to develop the present war into a religious war. It is trying to steal the war. By all the circumstances of its training it is unteachable. It knows no better. It will go on—until some economic revolution robs it of its funds. Then as a political influence it may evaporate very rapidly. The Anglican Church and many other Protestant sects, the wealthy Baptists, for example, follow suit.

It is not only in British affairs that this propaganda goes on. With the onset of war France became militant and Catholic. It suppressed the Communist Party, as a gesture of resentment against Russia and a precaution against post-war collectivisation. The Belgian caricaturist Raemaekers presented Hitler day after day as a pitiful weakling already disposed of and worthy of sympathy, while Stalin he represented as a frightful giant with horns and a tail. Yet both France and Britain were at peace with Russia and had every reason to come to a working understanding with that country. The attitude of Stalin's Russia to the war was on the whole cold, contemptuous and reasonable.

It is not as if these devious schemes can take us somewhere; it is not that this restoration of the Holy Roman Empire is a possibility. You confront these Catholic politicians, just as you confront the politicians of Westminster, with these two cardinal facts, the abolition of distance and the change of scale. In vain. You cannot get any realisation of the significance of these things into those idea-proofed skulls. They are deaf to it, blind to it. They cannot see that it makes any difference at all to their long-established mental habits. If their minds waver for a moment they utter little magic prayers to exorcise the gleam.

What, they ask, has "*mere size*" to do with the soul of man, "*mere speed, mere power*"? What can the young do better than subdue their natural urgency to live and do? What has *mere life* to do with the religious outlook? The war, these Vatican propagandists insist, is a "crusade" against modernism, against socialism and free thought, the restoration of priestly authority is its end; our sons are fighting to enable the priest to thrust his pious uncleanness once again between reader and book, child and knowledge, husband and wife, sons and lovers. While honest men are fighting now to put an end to military aggression, to resume indeed that "war to end war" that was aborted to give us the League of Nations, these bigots to this.

day are perverting the issue as much as they dare, trying to represent it as a religious war against the modern spirit.

The well-trained Moslem, the American fundamentalist, the orthodox Jew, all the fixed cultures, produce similar irrelevant and wasteful resistances, but the Catholic organisation reaches further and is more persistent. It is incurably Aristotelean. It is frankly opposed to human effort and the idea of progress. It makes no pretence about it.

Such cross-activities as these complicate, delay and may even sabotage effectively every effort to solve the problem of a lucid collectivisation of the world's affairs, but they do not alter the essential fact that it is only through a rationalisation and coalescence of constructive revolutionary movements everywhere and a liberal triumph over the dogmatism of the class war, that we can hope to emerge from the present wreckage of our world.

### § 33

## FEDERATION

LET US NOW TAKE up certain vaguely constructive proposals which seem still to be very much in popular thought. They find their cardinal expression in a book called *Union Now* by Mr. Clarence K. Streit, which has launched the magic word "Federation" upon the world. The "democracies" of the world are to get together upon a sort of enlargement of the Federal Constitution of the United States (which produced one of the bloodiest civil wars in all history) and then all will be well with us.

Let us consider whether this word "Federation" is of any value in organising the Western Revolution. I would suggest it is. I think it may be a means of mental release for many people who would otherwise have remained dully resistant to any sort of change.

This Federation project has an air of reasonableness. It is attractive to a number of influential people who wish with the minimum of adaptation to remain influential in a changing world, and particularly is it attractive to what I may call the

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liberal-conservative elements of the prosperous classes in America and Great Britain and the Oslo countries, because it puts the most difficult aspect of the problem, the need for a collective socialisation, so completely in the background that it can be ignored. This enables them to take quite a bright and hopeful view of the future without any serious hindrance to their present preoccupations.

They think that Federation, reasonably defined, may suspend the possibility of war for a considerable period and so lighten the burden of taxation that the present crushing demands on them will relax and they will be able to resume, on a slightly more economical scale perhaps, their former way of living. Everything that gives them hope and self-respect and preserves their homes from the worst indignities of panic, appeasement, treason-hunting and the rest of it, is to be encouraged, and meanwhile their sons will have time to think and it may be possible so to search, ransack and rationalise the Streit project as to make a genuine and workable scheme for the socialisation of the world.

In the earlier part of this book I have examined the word "democracy" with some care. I showed that it was still a very incompletely realised aspiration, that its complete development involved socialism and a level of education and information attained as yet by no community in the world. Mr. Streit gives a looser, more rhetorical statement—a more idealistic statement, shall we say?—of his conception of democracy, the sort of statement that would be considered wildly exaggerated even if it was war propaganda, and though unhappily it is remote from any achieved reality, he proceeds without further enquiry as if it were a description of existing realities in what he calls the "democracies" of the world. In them he imagines he finds "government of the people, by the people, for the people".

In my chapters *What is Democracy?* and *Where is Democracy?* I do my best to bring Mr. Streit down to the harsh and difficult facts of the case. I will go now a little more into particulars in my examination of his project.

His "founder democracies" were to be: "The American Union, the British Commonwealth (specifically the United Kingdom, the Federal Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, Ireland), the French Republic, Belgium, the Netherlands, the

Swiss Confederation, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland."

Scarcely one of these is really a fully working democracy. And the Union of South Africa is a particularly bad and dangerous case of race tyranny. Ireland is an incipient religious war and not one country but two. Poland does not come into Mr. Streit's list of democracies at all. His book was written in 1938 when Poland was a totalitarian country holding, in defiance of the League of Nations, Vilna, which it had taken from Lithuania, large areas of non-Polish country it had *conquered* from Russia, and fragments gained by the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. It only became a democracy, even technically and for a brief period, before its collapse in September 1939. But that is by the way. None of these fifteen (or ten) "founder democracies" are really democracies at all. We start badly. But they might be made socialist democracies and their federation might be made something very real indeed—at a price. The U.S.S.R. is a federated socialist system, which has shown a fairly successful political solidarity during the past two decades, whatever else it has done or failed to do.

Now let us help Mr. Streit to convert his "federation" from a noble but extremely rhetorical aspiration into a living reality. He is aware that this must be done at a price, but I want to suggest that that price is, from what I judge to be his point of view, far greater, and the change much simpler, more general and possibly even closer at hand, than he supposes. He is disposed to appeal to existing administrative organisations, and it is questionable whether they are the right people to execute his designs. One of the difficulties he glosses over is the possible reluctance of the India Office to hand over the control of India (Ceylon and Burma he does not mention) to the new Federal Government, which would also, I presume, take charge of the fairly well governed and happy fifty-odd million people of the Dutch East Indies, the French colonial empire, the West Indies and so on. This, unless he proposes merely to re-christen the India Office, etc., is asking for an immense outbreak of honesty and competence on the part of the new Federal officialdom. It is also treating the possible contribution of these five or six hundred million of dusky peoples to the new order with a levity inconsistent with democratic ideals.

Quite a lot of these people have brains which are as good or better than normal European brains. You could educate the

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whole world to the not very exalted level of a Cambridge graduate in a single lifetime, if you had schools, colleges, apparatus and teachers enough. The radio, the cinema, the gramophone, the improvements in both production and distribution, have made it possible to increase the range and effectiveness of a gifted teacher a thousandfold. We have seen intensive war preparations galore, but no one has dreamt yet of an intensive educational effort. None of us really likes to see other people being educated. They may be getting an advantage over our privileged selves. Suppose we overcome that primitive jealousy. Suppose we speed up—as we are now physically able to do—the education and enfranchisement of these huge undeveloped reservoirs of human capacity. Suppose we tack that on to the *Union Now* idea. Suppose we stipulate that Federation, wherever it extends, means a New and Powerful Education. In Bengal, in Java, in the Congo Free State, quite as much as in Tennessee or Georgia or South Ireland. Suppose we think a little less about “gradual enfranchisement” by votes and experiments in local autonomy and all those old ideas, and a little more about the enfranchisement of the mind. Suppose we drop that old cant about “politically immature” peoples.

That is one direction in which Mr. Streit's proposals are open to improvement. Let us turn to another in which he does not seem to have realised all the implications of his proposal. This great Union is to have a union money and a union customs-free economy. What follows upon that? More I think than he realises.

There is one aspect of money to which the majority of those that discuss it seem to be incurably blind. You cannot have a theory of money or any plan about money by itself in the air. Money is not a thing in itself; it is a working part of an economic system. *Money varies in its nature with the laws and ideas of property in a community.* As a community moves towards collectivism and communism, for example, money simplifies out. Money is as necessary in a communism as it is in any other system, but its function therein is at its simplest. Payment in kind to the worker gives him no freedom of choice among the goods the community produces. Money does. Money becomes the incentive that “works the worker” and nothing more.



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But directly you allow individuals not only to obtain goods for consumption, but also to obtain credit to procure material for types of production outside the staple productions of the state, the question of credit and debt arises and money becomes more complicated. With every liberation of this or that product or service from collective control to business or experimental exploitation, the play of the money system enlarges and the laws regulating what you may do with your money, what interest you may take for it, the company laws, bankruptcy laws and so forth increase. In any highly developed collective system the administration will certainly have to give credits for hopeful experimental enterprises. When the system is not a collectivism, monetary operations for gain are bound to creep in and become more and more complicated. Where most of the substantial side of life is entrusted to unco-ordinated private enterprise, the intricacy of the money apparatus increases enormously. Monetary manipulation becomes a greater and greater factor in the competitive struggle, not only between individuals and firms, but between states. As Mr. Streit himself shows, in an excellent discussion of the abandonment of the gold standard, inflation and deflation become devices in international competition. Money becomes strategic, just as pipe lines and railways can become strategic.

This being so it is plain that for the Federal Union a common money means *an identical economic life* throughout the Union. And this, too, is implied also in Mr. Streit's "customs-free" economy. It is impossible to have a common money when a dollar or a pound, or whatever it is, can buy this, that or the other advantage in one state and is debarred from anything but bare purchases for consumption in another. So that this Federal Union is bound to be a uniform economic system. There can be only very slight variations in the control of economic life.

In the preceding sections the implacable forces that make for the collectivisation of the world, or disaster, have been exposed. It follows that "Federation" means practically uniform socialism within the Federated limits, leading, as state after state is incorporated, to world socialism. There manifestly we carry Mr. Streit farther than he realises he goes—as yet. For it is fairly evident that he is under the impression that a large measure of independent private business is to go on throughout

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the Union. I doubt if he imagines it is necessary to go beyond the partial socialisation already achieved by the New Deal. But we have assembled evidence to show that the profit scramble, the wild days of uncorrelated "business" are over for ever.

And again though he realises and states very clearly that governments are made for man and not man for governments, though he applauds the great declarations of the Convention that created the American Constitution, wherein, "we the people of the United States" overrode the haggling of the separate states and established the American Federal Constitution, nevertheless he is curiously chary of superseding any existing legal governments in the present world. He is chary of talking of "We the people of the world". But many of us are coming to realise that *all* existing sovereign governments have to go into the melting pot, we believe that it is a world revolution which is upon us, and that in the great struggle to evoke a Westernised World Socialism, contemporary governments must vanish like straw hats in the rapids of Niagara. Mr. Streit, however, becomes extraordinarily legal-minded at this stage. I do not think that he realises the forces of destruction that are gathering and so I think he hesitates to plan a reconstruction upon anything like the scale that may become possible.

He evades even the obvious necessity that under a Federal Government the monarchies of Great Britain, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Holland, if they survive at all, must become like the mediatised sovereigns of the component states of the former German Empire, mere ceremonial vestiges. Perhaps he thinks that, but he does not say it outright. I do not know if he has pondered the New York World Fair of 1939 nor the significance of the Royal Visit to America in that year, and thought how much there is in the British system that would have to be abandoned if his Federation is to become a reality. In most of the implications of the word, it must cease to be "British". His Illustrative Constitution is achieved with an altogether forensic disregard of the fundamental changes in human conditions to which we have to adapt ourselves or perish. He thinks of war by itself and not as an eruption due to deeper maladaptations. But if we push his earlier stipulations to their necessary completion, we need not trouble very much about that sample constitution of his, which is to adjust the balance

so fairly among the constituent states. The abolition of distance must inevitably substitute functional associations and loyalties for local attributions, if human society does not break up altogether. The local divisions will melt into a world collectivity and the main conflicts in a progressively unifying Federation are much more likely to be between different world-wide types and associations of workers.

So far with *Union Now*. One of Mr. Streit's outstanding merits is that he has had the courage to make definite proposals on which we can birth. I doubt if a European could have produced any such book. Its naive political legalism, its idea of salvation by constitution, and its manifest faith in the magic beneficence of private enterprise, are distinctly in the vein of an American, almost a pre-New Deal American, who has become, if anything, more American, through his experiences of the deepening disorder of Europe. So many Americans still look on at world affairs like spectators at a ball game who are capable of vociferous partisanship but still have no real sense of participation; they do not realise that the ground is moving under their seats also, and that the social revolution is breaking surface to engulf them in their turn. To most of us—to most of us over forty at any rate—the idea of a fundamental change in our way of life is so unpalatable that we ignore it to the last moment.

Mr. Streit betrays at times as vivid a sense of advancing social collapse as I have, but it has still to occur to him that that collapse may be conclusive. There may be dark ages, a relapse into barbarism, but somewhen and somehow he thinks man *must* recover. George Bernard Shaw has recently been saying the same thing.

It may be worse than that.

I have given Mr. Streit scarcely a word of praise, because that would be beside the mark here. He wrote his book sincerely as a genuine contribution to the unsystematic world conference that is now going on, admitting the possibility of error, demanding criticism, and I have dealt with it in that spirit.

Unfortunately his word has gone much further than his book. His book says definite things and, even when one disagrees with it, it is good as a point of departure. But a number of people have caught up this word "Federation";

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and our minds are distracted by a multitude of appeals to support Federal projects with the most various content or with no content at all.

All the scores and hundreds of thousands of nice people who were signing peace pledges and so forth a few years ago, without the slightest attempt in the world to understand what they meant by peace, are now echoing this new magic word with as little conception of any content for it. They did not realise that peace means so complicated and difficult an ordering and balancing of human society that it has never been sustained since man became man, and that we have wars and preparatory interludes between wars because that is a much simpler and easier sequence for our wilful, muddle-headed, suspicious and aggressive species. These people still think we can get this new and wonderful state of affairs just by clamouring for it.

And having failed to get peace by saying "Peace" over and over again, they are now with an immense sense of discovery saying "Federation". What must happen to men in conspicuous public positions I do not know, but even an irresponsible literary man like myself finds himself inundated with innumerable lengthy private letters, hysterical post-cards, pamphlets from budding organisations, "declarations" to sign, demands for subscriptions, all in the name of the new panacea, all as vain and unproductive as the bleating of lost sheep. And I cannot open a newspaper without finding some eminent contemporary writing a letter to it, saying gently, firmly and bravely, the same word, sometimes with bits of *Union Now* tacked on to it, and sometimes with minor improvements, but often with nothing more than the bare idea.

All sorts of idealistic movements for world peace which have been talking quietly to themselves for years and years have been stirred up to follow the new banner. Long before the Great War there was a book by Sir Max Waechter, a friend of King Edward the Seventh, advocating the United States of Europe, and that inexact but flattering parallelism to the United States of America has recurred frequently; as a phrase thrown out by Monsieur Briand for example, and as a project put forward by an Austrian-Japanese writes. Count Coudenhove-Kalergi, who even devised a flag for the Union. The main objection to the idea is that there are hardly

any states completely in Europe, except Switzerland, San Marino, Andorra and a few of the Versailles creations. Almost all the other European states extend far beyond the European limits both politically and in their sympathies and cultural relations. They trail with them more than half mankind. About a tenth of the British Empire is in Europe and still less of the Dutch Empire; Russia, Turkey, France, are less European than not; Spain and Portugal have their closest links with South America.

Few Europeans think of themselves as "Europeans". I, for example, am Kentish, and a large part of my interests, intellectual and material, are Transatlantic. I dislike calling myself "British" and I like to think of myself as a member of a great English-speaking community, which spreads irrespective of race and colour round and about the world. I am annoyed when an American calls me a "foreigner"—war with America would seem to me just as insane as war with Cornwall—and I find the idea of cutting myself off from the English-speaking peoples of America and Asia to follow the flag of my Austrian-Japanese friend into a federally bunched-up Europe extremely unattractive.

It would, I suggest, be far easier to create the United States of the World, which is Mr. Streit's ultimate objective, than to get together the so-called continent of Europe into any sort of unity.

I find most of these United States of Europe movements have been jumping on to the Federation band-waggon.

My old friend and antagonist, Lord David Davies, for instance, has recently succumbed to the infection. He was concerned about the problem of a World Pax in the days when the League of Nations Society and other associated bodies were amalgamated in the League of Nations Union. He was struck then by an idea, an analogy, and the experience was unique for him. He asked why individuals went about in modern communities in nearly perfect security from assault and robbery, without any need to bear arms. His answer was the policeman. And from that he went on to the question of what was needed for states and nations to go their ways with the same blissful immunity from violence and plunder, and it seemed to him a complete and reasonable answer to say "an international policeman". And there you were! He did not see, he is probably

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quite incapable of seeing, that a state is something quite different in its nature and behaviour from an individual human being. When he was asked to explain how that international policeman was to be created and sustained, he just went on saying "international policeman". He has been saying it for years. Sometimes it seems it is to be the League of Nations, sometimes the British Empire, sometimes an international Air Force, which is to undertake this grave responsibility. The bench before which the policeman is to hale the offender and the position of the lock-up are not indicated. Finding our criticisms uncongenial, his lordship went off with his great idea, like a penguin which has found an egg, to incubate it alone. I hope he will be spared to say "international policeman" for many years to come, but I do not believe he has ever perceived or ever will perceive that, brilliant as his one inspiration was, it still left vast areas of the problem in darkness. Being a man of considerable means, he has been able to sustain a "New Commonwealth" movement and publish books and a periodical in which his one great idea is elaborated rather than developed.

But I will not deal further with the very incoherent multitude that now echoes this word "Federation". Many among them will cease to cerebrate further and fall by the wayside, but many will go on thinking, and if they go on thinking they will come to perceive more and more clearly the realities of the case. Federation, they will feel, is not enough.

So much for the present "Federalist" front. As a fundamental basis of action, as a declared end, it seems hopelessly vague and confused and, if one may coin a phrase, hopelessly optimistic. But since the concept seems to be the way to release a number of minds from belief in the sufficiency of a League of Nations, associated or not associated with British Imperialism, it has been worth while to consider how it can be amplified and turned in the direction of that full and open-eyed world-wide collectivisation which a study of existing conditions obliges us to believe is the only alternative to the complete degeneration of our species.

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LET US RETURN to our main purpose, which is to examine the way in which we are to face up to this impending World Revolution.

To many minds this idea of Revolution is almost inseparable from visions of street barricades made of paving-stones and overturned vehicles, ragged mobs armed with impromptu weapons and inspired by defiant songs, prisons broken and a general jail delivery, palaces stormed, a great hunting of ladies and gentlemen, decapitated but still beautiful heads on pikes, regicides of the most sinister quality, the busy guillotine, a crescendo of disorder ending in a whiff of grapeshot. . . .

That was one type of Revolution. It is what one might call the Catholic type of Revolution, that is to say, it is the ultimate phase of a long period of Catholic living and teaching. People do not realise this and some will be indignant at its being stated so barely. Yet the facts stare us in the face, common knowledge, not to be denied. That furious, hungry, desperate, brutal mob was the outcome of generations of Catholic rule, Catholic morality and Catholic education. The King of France was the "Most Christian King, the eldest son of the Church"; he was master of the economic and financial life of the community, and the Catholic Church controlled the intellectual life of the community and the education of the people absolutely. That mob was the outcome. It is absurd to parrot that "Christianity has never been tried". Christianity in its most highly developed form has been tried and tried again. It was tried for centuries fully and completely, in Spain, France, Italy. It was responsible for the filth and chronic pestilence and famine of medieval England. It inculcated purity but it never inculcated mental or physical cleanliness. Catholic Christianity had practically unchallenged power in France for generations. It was free to teach as it chose and as much as it chose. It dominated the common life entirely. The Catholic system in France cannot have reaped anything it did not sow, for no other sowers were allowed. That hideous mob of

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murderous ragamuffins we are so familiar with in pictures of the period was the final harvest of its regime.

The more Catholic reactionaries revile the insurgent common people of the first French Revolution, the more they condemn themselves. It is the most impudent perversion of reality for them to snivel about the guillotine and the tumbrils, as though these were not purely Catholic products, as though they came in suddenly from outside to wreck a genteel Paradise. They were the last stage of the systematic injustice and ignorance of a strictly Catholic regime. One phase succeeded another with relentless logic. The Marseillaise completed the life-cycle of Catholicism.

In Spain, too, and in Mexico we have seen undisputed educational and moral Catholic ascendancy, the Church with a free hand, producing a similar uprush of blind resentment. The crowds there also were cruel and blasphemous; but Catholicism cannot complain; for Catholicism hatched them. Priests and nuns *who had been the sole teachers of the people* were insulted and outraged and churches defiled. Surely if the Church is anything like what it claims to be, the people would have loved it. They would not have behaved as though sacrilege was a gratifying relief.

But these Catholic Revolutions are only specimens of one single type of Revolution. A Revolution need not be a spontaneous storm of indignation against intolerable indignities and deprivations. It can take quite other forms.

As a second variety of Revolution, which is in sharp contrast with the indignation-revolt in which so many periods of unchallenged Catholic ascendancy have ended, we may take what we may call the "revolution conspiracy", in which a number of people set about organising the forces of discomfort and resentment and loosening the grip of the government's forces, in order to bring about a fundamental change of system. The ideal of this type is the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, provided it is a little simplified and misunderstood. This, reduced to a working theory by its advocates, is conceived of as a systematic cultivation of a public state of mind favourable to a Revolution together with an inner circle of preparation for a "seizure of power". Quite a number of Communist and other leftish writers, bright young men, without much political experience, have let their imaginations loose upon the



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“technique” of such an adventure. They have brought the Nazi and Fascist Revolutions into the material for their studies. Modern social structure with its concentration of directive, informative and coercive power about radio stations, telephone exchanges, newspaper offices, police stations, arsenals and the like, lends itself to quasi-gangster exploitation of this type. There is a great rushing about and occupation of key centres, an organised capture, imprisonment or murder of possible opponents, and the country is confronted with a *fait accompli*. The regimentation of the more or less reluctant population follows.

But a Revolution need be neither an explosion nor a *coup d'état*. And the Revolution that lies before us now as the only hopeful alternative to chaos, either directly or after an interlude of world communism, is to be attained, if it is attained at all, by neither of these methods. The first is too rhetorical and chaotic and leads simply to a Champion and tyranny; the second is too conspiratorial and leads through an obscure struggle of masterful personalities to a similar end. Neither is lucid enough and deliberate enough to achieve a permanent change in the form and texture of human affairs.

An altogether different type of Revolution may or may not be possible. No one can say that it is possible unless it is tried, but one can say with some assurance that unless it can be achieved the outlook for mankind for many generations at least is hopeless. The new Revolution aims essentially at a change in directive ideas. In its completeness it is an untried method.

It depends for its success upon whether a sufficient number of minds can be brought to realise that the choice before us now is *not* a choice between further revolution or more or less reactionary conservatism, but a choice between so carrying on and so organising the process of change in our affairs as to produce a new world order, or suffering an entire and perhaps irreparable social collapse. Our argument throughout has been that things have gone too far ever to be put back again to any similitude of what they have been. We can no more dream of remaining where we are than think of going back in the middle of a dive. We must go through with these present changes, adapt ourselves to them, adjust ourselves to the plunge, or be destroyed by them. We must go through

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with these changes just as we must go through this ill-conceived war, because there is as yet no possible end for it.

There will be no possible way of ending it until the new Revolution defines itself. If it is patched up now without a clear-headed settlement understood and accepted throughout the world, we shall have only the simulacrum of a peace. A patched-up peace now will not even save us from the horrors of war, it will postpone them only to aggravate them in a few years' time. You cannot end this war yet, you can at best adjourn it.

The reorganisation of the world has at first to be mainly the work of a "movement" or a Party or a religion or cult, whatever we choose to call it. We may call it the New Liberalism or the New Radicalism or what not. It will not be a close-knit organisation, toeing the Party line and so forth. It may be very loose-knit and many faceted, but if a sufficient number of minds throughout the world, irrespective of race, origin or economic and social habituations, can be brought to the free and candid recognition of the essentials of the human problem, then their effective collaboration in a conscious, explicit and open effort to reconstruct human society will ensue.

And to begin with they will do all they can to spread and perfect this conception of a new world order, which they will regard as the only working frame for their activities, while at the same time they will set themselves to discover and associate with themselves, everyone, everywhere, who is intellectually able to grasp the same broad ideas and morally disposed to realise them.

The distribution of this essential conception one may call propaganda, but in reality it is education. The opening phase of this new type of Revolution must involve therefore a campaign for a re-invigorated and modernised education throughout the world, an education that will have the same ratio to the education of a couple of hundred years ago as the electric lighting of a contemporary city has to the chandeliers and oil lamps of the same period. On its present mental levels humanity can do no better than what it is doing now.

Vitalising education is only possible when it is under the influence of people who are themselves learning. It is inseparable from the modern idea of education that it should be knit

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up to incessant research. We say research rather than science. It is the better word because it is free from any suggestion of that finality which means dogmatism and death.

All education tends to become stylistic and sterile unless it is kept in close touch with experimental verification and practical work, and consequently this new movement of revolutionary initiative, must at the same time be sustaining realistic political and social activities and working steadily for the collectivisation of governments and economic life. The intellectual movement will be only the initiatory and correlating part of the new revolutionary drive. These practical activities must be various. Everyone engaged in them must be thinking for himself and not waiting for orders. The only dictatorship he will recognise is the dictatorship of the plain understanding and the invincible fact.

And if this culminating Revolution is to be accomplished, then the participation of every conceivable sort of human being who has the mental grasp to see these broad realities of the world situation and the moral quality to do something about it, must be welcomed.

Previous revolutionary thrusts have been vitiated by bad psychology. They have given great play to the gratification of the inferiority complexes that arise out of class disadvantages. It is no doubt very unjust that anyone should be better educated, healthier and less fearful of the world than anyone else, but that is no reason why the new Revolution should not make the fullest use of the health, education, vigour and courage of the fortunate. The Revolution we are contemplating will aim at abolishing the bitterness of frustration. But certainly it will do nothing to avenge it. Nothing whatever. Let the dead past punish its dead.

It is one of the most vicious streaks in the Marxist teaching to suggest that all people of wealth and capacity living in a community in which unco-ordinated private enterprise plays a large part are necessarily demoralised by the advantages they enjoy and that they must be dispossessed by the worker and the peasant, who are presented as endowed with a collective virtue capable of running all the complex machinery of a modern community. But the staring truth of the matter is that an unco-ordinated scramble between individuals and nations alike, demoralises all concerned. Everyone is cor-

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rupted, the filching tramp by the roadside, the servile hand-kissing peasant of Eastern Europe, the dole-bribed loafer, as much as the woman who marries for money, the company promoter, the industrial organiser, the rent-exacting landlord and the diplomatic agent. When the social atmosphere is tainted everybody is ill.

Wealth, personal freedom and education may and do produce wasters and oppressive people, but they may also release creative and administrative minds to opportunity. The history of science and invention before the nineteenth century confirms this. On the whole if we are to assume there is anything good in humanity at all, it is more reasonable to expect it to appear when there is most opportunity.

And in further confutation of the Marxist caricature of human motives, we have the very considerable number of young people drawn from middle-class and upper-class homes, who figure in the extreme left movement everywhere. It is their moral reaction to the "stuffiness" and social ineffectiveness of their parents and their own sort of people. They seek an outlet for their abilities that is not gainful but serviceable. Many have sought an honourable life—and often found it, and death with it—in the struggle against the Catholics and their Moorish and Fascist helpers in Spain.

It is a misfortune of their generation that so many of them have fallen into the mental traps of Marxism. It has been my absurd experience to encounter noisy meetings of expensive young men at Oxford, not one of them stunted physically as I was by twenty years of under-nourishment and devitalised upbringing, all pretending to be rough-hewn collarless proletarians in shocked revolt against my bourgeois tyranny and the modest comfort of my declining years, and reciting the ridiculous class-war phrases by which they protected their minds from any recognition of the realities of the case. But though that attitude demonstrates the unstimulating education of their preparatory and public schools, which had thrown them thus uncritical and emotional into the problems of undergraduate life, it does not detract from the fact that *they had found the idea of abandoning themselves to a revolutionary reconstruction of society*, that promised to end its enormous waste of potential happiness and achievement, *extremely attractive*, notwithstanding that their own advantages seemed to be reasonably

secure.

Faced with the immediate approach of discomfort, indignity, wasted years, mutilation—death is soon over but one wakes up again to mutilation every morning—because of this ill-conceived war; faced also by the fiscal extinction of most of the social advantages of their families; these young people with a leftist twist are likely not only to do some very profitable re-examination of their own possibilities but also to find themselves joined in that re-examination by a very considerable number of others who have hitherto been repelled by the obvious foolishness and insincerity of the hammer and sickle symbols for them (workers and peasants of Oxford!) and the exasperating dogmatism of the orthodox Marxist. And may not some of the brighter of these young people instead of waiting with a sort of masochistic devotion in the hope of being overtaken by an insurrectionary revolution from which they will emerge greasy, unshaven, class-conscious and in incessant danger of liquidation, decide that before the Revolution gets hold of them they will get hold of the Revolution and complete its great intimations.

This new and complete Revolution we contemplate can be defined in a very few words. It is (a) outright world-socialism, scientifically planned and directed, plus (b) a sustained insistence upon law, law based on a fuller, more jealously conceived restatement of the personal Rights of Man, plus (c) the completest freedom of speech, criticism and publication, and a sedulous expansion of the educational organisation to the ever-growing demands of the new order. What we may call the Eastern or Bolshevik Collectivism, the Revolution of the *Internationale*, has failed to achieve even the first of these three items and it has never even attempted the other two.

Putting it at its compactest, it is the triangle of Socialism, Law and Knowledge, which frames the Revolution which may yet save the world.

Socialism! Become outright collectivists? Very few men of the more fortunate classes in our old collapsing society who are over fifty will be able to readjust their minds to that. It will seem an entirely repulsive suggestion to them. (The average age of the British Cabinet at the present time is well over sixty.) But it need not be repulsive at all to their sons. They will be impoverished anyhow. The stars in their courses

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are seeing to that. And that will help them greatly to realise that an administrative and constructive life may be far more interesting than a life of mere acquisition and spending.

From administrative control to administrative participation and then to direct administration are easy steps. They are being taken now, first in one matter and then in another. On both sides of the Atlantic. Reluctantly and often very disingenuously and against energetic but diminishing resistances. Great Britain, like America, may become a Socialist system without a definitive Revolution, protesting all the time that it is doing nothing of the sort.

In Britain we have now no distinctively educated class, but all up and down the social scale there are well-read men and women who have thought intently upon these great problems we have been discussing. To many of them and maybe to enough of them to start the avalanche of purpose that will certainly develop from a clear and determined beginning, this conception of Revolution to evoke a liberal collectivised world may appeal. And so at last we narrow down our enquiry to an examination of what has to be done now to save the Revolution, what the movement or its Party—so far as it may use the semblance of a Party—will do, what its Policy will be. Hitherto we have been demonstrating why a reasonable man, of any race or language anywhere, should become a "Western" Revolutionary. We have now to review the immediate activities to which he can give himself.

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LET US RESTATE THE general conclusions to which our preceding argument has brought us.

The establishment of a progressive world socialism in which the freedoms, health and happiness of every individual are protected by a universal law based on a re-declaration of the rights of man, and wherein there is the utmost liberty of thought, criticism and suggestion, is the plain, rational objective before us now. Only the effective realisation of this objective can

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establish peace on earth and arrest the present march of human affairs to misery and destruction. We cannot reiterate this objective too clearly and too frequently. The triangle of collectivisation, law and knowledge should embody the common purpose of all mankind.

But between us and that goal intervenes the vast and deepening disorders of our time. The new order cannot be brought into existence without a gigantic and more or less co-ordinated effort of the saner and abler elements in the human population. The thing cannot be done rapidly and melodramatically. That effort must supply the frame for all sane social and political activities *and a practical criterion for all religious and educational associations*. But since our world is multitudinously varied and confused, it is impossible to narrow down this new revolutionary movement to any single class, organisation or Party. It is too great a thing for that. It will in its expansion produce and perhaps discard a number of organisations and Parties, converging upon its ultimate objective. Consequently, in order to review the social and political activities of sane, clear-headed people to-day, we have to deal with them piecemeal from a number of points of view. We have to consider an advance upon a long and various front.

Let us begin then with the problem of sanity in face of the political methods of our time. What are we to do as voting citizens? There I think the history of the so-called democracies in the past half-century is fairly conclusive. Our present electoral methods, which give no choice but a bilateral choice to the citizen and so force a two-party system upon him, are a mere caricature of representative government. They have produced upon both sides of the Atlantic, big, stupid and corrupt party machines. That was bound to happen, and yet to this day there is a sort of shyness in the minds of young men interested in politics when it comes to discussing Proportional Representation. They think it is a "bit faddy". At best it is a side issue. Party politicians strive to maintain that bashfulness, because they know quite clearly that what is called Proportional Representation with the single transferable vote in large constituencies, returning a dozen members or more, is extinction for the mere party hack and destruction for party organisations.

The machine system in the United States is more elaborate,

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more deeply entrenched legally in the Constitution and illegally in the spoils system, and it may prove more difficult to modernise than the British, which is based on an outworn caste tradition. But both Parliament and Congress are essentially similar in their fundamental quality. They trade in titles, concessions and the public welfare, and they are only amenable in the rough and at long last to the movements of public opinion. It is an open question whether they are much more responsive to popular feeling than the Dictators we denounce so unreservedly as the antithesis of democracy. They betray a great disregard of mass responses. They explain less. They disregard more. The Dictators have to go on talking and talking, not always truthfully but they have to talk. A dumb Dictator is inconceivable.

In such times of extensive stress and crisis as the present, the baffling slowness, inefficiency and wastefulness of the party system become so manifest that some of its worst pretences are put aside. The party game is suspended. His Majesty's Opposition abandons the pose of safeguarding the interests of the common citizens from those scoundrels upon the government benches; Republicans and Democrats begin to cross the party line to discuss the new situation. Even the men who live professionally by the Parliamentary (Congressional) imposture, abandon it if they are sufficiently frightened by the posture of affairs. The appearance of an All-Party National Government in Great Britain was inevitable.

Great Britain has in effect gone socialist in a couple of months; she is also suspending party politics. Just as the United States did in the great slump. And in both cases this has happened because the rottenness and inefficiency of party politics stank to heaven in the face of danger. And since in both cases Party Government threw up its hands and bolted, is there any conceivable reason why we should let it come back at any appearance of victory or recovery, why we should not go ahead from where we are to a less impromptu socialist regime under a permanent non-party administration, to the reality if not to the form of a permanent socialist government?

Now here I have nothing to suggest about America. I have never, for example, tried to work out the consequences of the absence of executive ministers from the legislature. I am inclined to think that is one of the weak points in the



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Constitution and that the English usage which exposes the minister to question time in the House and makes him a prime mover in legislation affecting his department, is a less complicated and therefore more democratic arrangement than the American one. And the powers and functions of the President and the Senate are so different from the consolidated powers of Cabinet and Prime Minister, that even when an Englishman has industriously "mugged up" the constitutional points, he is still almost as much at a loss to get the living reality as he would be if he were shown the score of an opera before hearing it played or the blue prints of a machine he had never seen in action. Very few Europeans understand the history of Woodrow Wilson, the Senate and his League of Nations. They think that "America", which they imagine as a large single individual, planted the latter institution upon Europe and then deliberately shuffled out of her responsibility for it, and they will never think otherwise. And they think that "America" kept out of the war to the very limit of decency, overcharged us for munitions that contributed to the common victory, and made a grievance because the consequent debt was not discharged. They talk like that while Americans talk as if no English were killed between 1914 and 1918 (we had 800,000 dead) until the noble American conscripts came forward to die for them (to the tune of about 50,000). Savour for example even the title of Quincy Howe's *England expects every American to do his Duty*. It's the meanest of titles, but many Americans seem to like it.

On my desk as I write is a pamphlet by a Mr. Robert Randall, nicely cyclostyled and got up, which urges a common attack on the United States as a solution of the problem of Europe. No countries will ever feel united unless they have a common enemy, and the natural common enemy for Europe, it is declared, is the United States. So to bring about the United States of Europe we are to begin by denouncing the Monroe doctrine. I believe in the honesty and good intentions of Mr. Robert Randall; he is, I am sure, no more in the pay of Germany, direct or indirect, than Mr. Quincy Howe or Mr. Harry Elmer Barnes; but could the most brilliant of Nazi war propagandists devise a more effectively estranging suggestion? . . .

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But I wander from my topic. I do not know how sane men in America are going to set about relaxing the stranglehold of the Constitution, get control of their own country out of the hands of those lumpish, solemnly cunning politicians with their great strong jowls developed by chewing-gum and orotund speaking, whose photographs add a real element of frightfulness to the pages of *Time*, how they are going to abolish the spoils system, discover, and educate to expand a competent civil service able to redeem the hampered promises of the New Deal and pull America into line with the reconstruction of the rest of the world. But I perceive that in politics, and indeed in most things, the underlying humour and sanity of Americans are apt to find a way round and do the impossible, and I have as little doubt they will manage it somehow as I have when I see a street performer on his little chair and carpet, all tied up with chains, waiting until there are sufficient pennies in the hat to justify exertion.

These differences in method, pace and tradition are a great misfortune to the whole English-speaking world. We English people do not respect Americans enough; we are too disposed to think they are all Quincy Howes and Harry Elmer Barneses and Borahs and suchlike, conceited and suspicious anti-British monomaniacs, who must be humoured at any cost; which is why we are never so frank and rude with them as they deserve. But the more we must contain ourselves the less we love them. Real brothers can curse each other and keep friends. Some day Britannia will give Columbia a piece of her mind, and that may clear the air. Said an exasperated Englishman to me a day or so ago: "I pray to God they keep out of the end of *this* war anyhow. We shall never hear the last of it if they don't. . . ."

Yet at a different pace our two peoples are travelling towards identical ends, and it is lamentable that a difference of accent and idiom should do more mischief than a difference of language.

So far as Great Britain goes things are nearer and closer to me, and it seems to me that there is an excellent opportunity now to catch the country in a state of socialisation and suspended party politics, and keep it at that. It is a logical but often disregarded corollary of the virtual creation of All-Party National Governments and the suspension of electoral

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contests, that since there is no Opposition, party criticism should give place to individual criticism of ministers, and that instead of throwing out governments we should set ourselves to throw out individual administrative failures. We need no longer confine our choice of public servants to political careerists. We can insist upon men who have done things and can do things, and whenever an election occurs we can organise a block of non-party voters who will vote if possible for an outsider of proved ability, and will at any rate insist on a clear statement from every Parliamentary candidate of the concrete service, if any, he has done the country, of his past and present financial entanglements and his family relationships and of any title he possesses. We can get these necessary particulars published and note what newspapers decline to do so. And if there are still only politicians to vote for, we can at least vote and spoil our voting cards by way of protest.

At present we see one public service after another in a mess through the incompetent handling of some party back and the unseen activities of interested parties. We want to know the individuals responsible for the incapacity of our Intelligence and Propaganda Ministries, so that we may induce them to quit public life. It would be quite easy now to excite a number of anxious people with a cry for "Competence not Party".

Quite a small body of public-spirited people could organise an active Vigilance Society to keep these ideas before the mass of voters and begin the elimination of inferior elements from our public life. This would be a practical job of primary importance in our political regeneration. It would lead directly to a new and more efficient political structure to carry on after the present war has collapsed or otherwise ended.

Following upon this campaign for the conclusive interment of the played-out party system, there comes the necessity for a much more strenuous search for administrative and technical ability throughout the country. We do not want to miss a single youngster who can be of use in the great business of making over Great Britain, which has been so badly, clumsily and wastefully socialised by our war perturbations, so that it may become a permanently efficient system. And from the base of the educational pyramid up to its apex of higher education for teachers, heads of departments

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and research, there is need for such a quickening of minds and methods as only a more or less organised movement of sanely critical men can bring about. We want ministers now of the highest quality in every department, but in no department of public life is a man of creative understanding, bold initiative and administrative power so necessary as in the Education Ministry.

So tranquil and unobtrusive has been the flow of educational affairs in the British Empire that it seems almost scandalous, and it is certainly "vulgar", to suggest that we need an educational Ginger Group to discover and support such a minister. We want a Minister of Education who can shock teachers into self-examination, electrify and rejuvenate old dons or put them away in ivory towers, and stimulate the younger ones. Under the party system the Education Ministry has always been a restful corner for some deserving party politician with an abject respect for his Alma Mater and the permanent officials. During war time, when other departments wake up, the Education Department sinks into a deeper lethargy. One cannot recall a single British Education Minister, since there have been such things in our island story as Ministers for Education, who signified anything at all educationally or did anything of his own impulse that was in the least worth while.

Suppose we found a live one—soon—and let him rip!

A third direction in which any gathering accumulation of sanity should direct its attention is the clumsy unfairness and indirectness of our present methods of expropriating the former well-to-do classes. The only observable principle seems to be widows and children first. Socialisation is being effected in Britain and America alike not by frank expropriation (with or without compensation) but by increasing government control and increasing taxation. Both our great communities are going into socialism backward and without ever looking round. This is good in so far as that technical experience and directive ability is changed over step by step from entirely private employment to public service, and on that side sane and helpful citizens have little to do beyond making the process conscious of itself and the public aware of the real nature of the change, but it is bad in its indiscriminate destruction of savings, which are the most exposed and vulnerable side of the old

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system. They are expropriated by profit-control and taxation alike, and at the same time they suffer in purchasing power by the acceleration of that process of monetary inflation which is the unavoidable readjustment, the petition in bankruptcy, of a community that has overspent.

The shareholding class dwindles and dies; widows and orphans, the old who are past work and the infirm who are incapable of it, are exposed in their declining years to a painful shrinkage of their modes of living; there is no doubt a diminution of social waste, but also there is an indirect impoverishment of free opinion and free scientific and artistic initiative as the endless societies, institutions and services which have enriched life for us and been very largely supported by voluntary subscriptions, shrivel. At present a large proportion of our scientific, artistic, literary and social workers are educated out of the private savings fund. In a class-war revolution these economically very defenceless but socially very convenient people are subjected to vindictive humiliation—it is viewed as a great triumph for their meaner neighbours—but a revolution sanely conducted will probably devise a system of terminable annuities and compensation, and of assistance to once voluntary associations, which will ease off the social dislocations due to the disappearance of one stratum of relatively free and independent people, before its successors, that is to say the growing class of retired officials, public administrators and so forth, find their feet and develop their own methods of assertion and enterprise.

### § 36

## DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN

LET US TURN NOW to another system of problems in the collectivisation of the world, and that is the preservation of liberty in the socialist state and the restoration of that confidence without which good behaviour is generally impossible.

This destruction of confidence is one of the less clearly recognised evils of the present phase of world-disintegration. In the past there have been periods when whole communities

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or at least large classes within communities have gone about their business with a general honesty, directness and sense of personal honour. They have taken a keen pride in the quality of their output. They have lived through life on tolerable and tolerant terms with their neighbours. The laws they observed have varied in different countries and periods, but their general nature was to make an orderly law-abiding life possible and natural. They had been taught and they believed and they had every reason to believe: "This (that or the other thing) is right. Do right and nothing, except by some strange exceptional misfortune, can touch you. The Law guarantees you that. Do right and nothing will rob you or frustrate you."

Nowhere in the world now is there very much of that feeling left, and as it disappears, the behaviour of people degenerates towards a panic scramble, towards heating, over-reaching, gang organisation, precautionary hoarding, concealment and all the meanness and anti-social feeling which is the natural outcome of insecurity.

Faced with what now amounts to something like a moral stampede, more and more sane men will realise the urgency for a restoration of confidence. The more socialisation proceeds and the more directive authority is concentrated, the more necessary is an efficient protection of individual from the impatience of well-meaning or narrow-minded or ruthless officials and indeed from all the possible abuses of advantage that are inevitable under such circumstances to our still childishly wicked breed.

In the past the Atlantic world has been particularly successful in expedients for meeting this aspect of human nature. Our characteristic and traditional method may be called the method of the fundamental declaration. Our Western peoples, by a happy instinct, have produced statements of Right, from Magna Carta onwards, to provide a structural defence between the citizen and the necessary growth of central authority.

And, plainly the successful organisation of the more universal and penetrating collectivism that is now being forced upon us all, will be frustrated in its most vital aspect unless its organisation is accompanied by the preservative of a new Declaration of the Rights of Man, that must, because of the increasing complexity of the social structure, be more generous, detailed and explicit than any of its predecessors. This Decla-

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ration must become the *common fundamental law* of all communities and collectivities assembled under the World Pax. It should be interwoven with the declared war aims of the combatant powers now; it should become the primary fact in any settlement; it should be put before the now combatant states for their approval, their embarrassed silence or their rejection.

### THE SANKEY DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

Let us leave these fantasies and come back to practical politics. I have discussed the practicability of extending war-welded federalism until it becomes world-wide, and so brings all the various *ad hoc* organisations it will necessarily develop, for disarmament, for the replacement of deported populations, for general economic restoration, and so forth, into parallelism with the minor permanent world federalisms. This time I don't think anyone will "call" a Peace Conference. We shall find one will grow informally out of the war conditions and out of the necessary explicit terms for an Armistice with an entirely untrustworthy enemy. One necessity in the process is a clear statement, in the broadest and most acceptable terms, not of any remote Utopia ahead, nor of any acceptance of things as they are, but of the *world* as reasonable people want to have it now.

We have such a statement.

Following a time-honoured precedent of all the free parliamentary nations of the world, a great number of people have come to realise the need of a clear formulation of creative liberal thought, revised and brought up to date. After a discussion, very ably organised by Mr. Ritchie Calder, in which thousands of people of every creed and type have participated, a Declaration of the Rights of Man was drawn up by a distinguished committee. It states, I believe, the Greatest Common Measure of human goodwill at the present time. It has been made acceptable to the professors of almost any form of religious belief—or none. It is, indeed, frankly socialistic and frankly cosmopolitan, and yet I fail to see how anyone who desires world peace and happiness, whatever his or her religion or race may be, can fail to subscribe to it.

Here it is, Introduction and all. It awaits the endorsement of at least the Labour and Liberal Parties in Great Britain and

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of liberal opinion throughout the world. Ultimately I hope it may be made acceptable to all the Allied and benevolently neutral governments, and embodied in their declared war aims. A certain resistance may have to be overcome to bring that about, and that is where there seems to be scope for immediate activity on the part of every sincere Revolutionary.

### INTRODUCTION

Within the space of little more than a hundred years there has been a complete revolution in the material conditions of human life. Invention and discovery have so changed the pace and nature of communications round and about the earth that the distances which formerly kept the states and nations of mankind apart have now been practically abolished. At the same time there has been so gigantic an increase of mechanical power, and such a release of human energy, that men's ability either to co-operate with, or to injure and oppress one another, and to consume, develop or waste the bounty of Nature, has been exaggerated beyond all comparison with former times. This process of change has mounted swiftly and steadily in the past third of a century, and is now approaching a climax.

It becomes imperative to adjust man's life and institutions to the increasing dangers and opportunities of these new circumstances. He is being forced to organise co-operation among the medley of separate sovereign States which has hitherto served his political ends. At the same time he finds it necessary to rescue his economic life from devastation by the immensely enhanced growth of profit-seeking business and finance. Political, economic and social collectivisation is being forced upon him. He responds to these new conditions blindly and with a great wastage of happiness and well-being.

Governments are either becoming State collectivism or passing under the sway of monopolist productive and financial organisations. Religious organisations, education and the Press are subordinated to the will of dictatorial groups and individuals, while scientific and literary work and a multitude of social activities, which have hitherto been independent and spontaneous, fall under the influence of these modern concentrations of power. Neither Governments nor great economic



and financial combinations were devised to exercise such powers; they grew up in response to the requirements of an earlier age.

Under the stress of the new conditions, insecurity, abuses and tyrannies increase; and liberty, particularly liberty of thought and speech, decays. Phase by phase these ill-adapted Governments and controls are restricting that free play of the individual mind which is the preservative of human efficiency and happiness. The temporary advantage of swift and secret action which these monopolisations of power display is gained at the price of profound and progressive social demoralisation. Bereft of liberty and sense of responsibility, the peoples are manifestly doomed to lapse, after a phase of servile discipline, into disorder and violence. Confidence and deliberation give place to hysteria, apathy and inefficiency. Everywhere war and monstrous economic exploitation are intensified, so that those very same increments of power and opportunity which have brought mankind within sight of an age of limitless plenty seem likely to be lost again, and, it may be, lost for ever, in a chaotic and irremediable social collapse.

It becomes clear that a unified political, economic and social order can alone put an end to these national and private appropriations that now waste the mighty possibilities of our time.

The history of the Western peoples has a lesson for all mankind. It has been the practice of what are called the democratic or Parliamentary countries to meet every enhancement and centralisation of power in the past by a definite and vigorous reassertion of the individual rights of man. Never before has the demand to revive that precedent been so urgent as it is now. We of the Parliamentary democracies recognise the inevitability of world reconstruction upon collectivist lines, but, after our tradition, we couple with that recognition a Declaration of Rights, so that the profound changes now in progress shall produce not an attempted reconstruction of human affairs in the dark, but a rational reconstruction conceived, and arrived at, in the full light of day. To that time-honoured instrument of a Declaration of Rights we therefore return, but now upon a world scale.

## DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN

### 1.—*Right to live*

By the word "man" in this Declaration is meant every living human being without distinction of age or sex.

Every man is a joint inheritor of all the natural resources and of the powers, inventions and possibilities accumulated by our forerunners.

He is entitled, within the measure of these resources and without distinction of race, colour or professed beliefs or opinions, to the nourishment, covering and medical care needed to realise his full possibilities of physical and mental development from birth to death.

Notwithstanding the various and unequal qualities of individuals, all men shall be deemed absolutely equal in the eyes of the law, equally important in *social* life and equally entitled to the respect of their fellow-men.

### 2.—*Protection of minors*

The natural and rightful guardians of those who are not of an age to protect themselves are their parents.

In default of such parental protection in whole or in part, the community, having due regard to the family traditions of the child, shall accept or provide alternative guardians.

### 3.—*Duty to the community*

It is the duty of every man not only to respect but to uphold and to advance the rights of all other men throughout the world.

Furthermore, it is his duty to contribute such service to the community as will ensure the performance of those necessary tasks for which the incentives which will operate in a free society do not provide.

It is only by doing his quota of service that a man can justify his partnership in the community.

No man shall be conscripted for military or other service to which he has a conscientious objection, but to perform no social duty whatsoever is to remain unenfranchised and under guardianship.

### 4.—*Right to knowledge*

It is the duty of the community to equip every man with sufficient education to enable him to be as useful and inter-

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ested a citizen as his capacity allows.

Furthermore, it is the duty of the community to render all knowledge available to him and such special education as will give him equality of opportunity for the development of his distinctive gifts in the service of mankind. He shall have easy and prompt access to all information necessary for him to form a judgment upon current events and issues.

### 5.—*Freedom of thought and worship*

Every man has a right to the utmost freedom of expression, discussion, association and worship.

### 6.—*Right to work*

A man may engage freely in any lawful occupation, earning such pay as the contribution that his work makes to the welfare of the community may justify or that the desire of any private individual or individuals for his products, his performances or the continuation of his activities may produce for him. He is entitled to paid employment by the community and to make suggestions as to the kind of employment which he considers himself able to perform. He is entitled to profit fully by the desirableness of his products and activities. And he is entitled to payment for calling attention to a product or conveying it to consumers to whom it would otherwise be unattainable. By doing so, he does a service for which he may legitimately profit. He is a useful agent. But buying and holding and selling again simply in order to make a profit is not lawful. It is speculation; it does no service; it makes profit out of want, and it can be profitable only by creating or sustaining want. It tempts men directly to the interception of legitimate profits, to forestalling, appropriation, hoarding and a complex of anti-social activities, and it is equally unlawful for private individuals and public administrative bodies.

### 7.—*Right in personal property*

In the enjoyment of his personal property, lawfully possessed, a man is entitled to protection from public or private violence, deprivation, compulsion and intimidation.

### 8.—*Freedom of movement*

A man may move freely about the world at his own expense.

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His private dwelling, however, and any reasonably limited enclosure of which he is the occupant, may be entered only with his consent or by a legally qualified person empowered with a warrant as the law may direct.

So long as by his movement he does not intrude upon the private domain of any other citizen, harm, or disfigure or encumber what is not his, interfere with, or endanger its proper use, or seriously impair the happiness of others, he shall have the right to come and go whenever he chooses, by land, air, or water, over any kind of country, mountain, moorland, river, lake, sea or ocean, and all the ample spaces of this, his world.

### 9.—*Personal liberty*

Unless a man is declared by a competent authority to be a danger to himself or to others through mental abnormality, a declaration which must be confirmed within seven days and thereafter reviewed at least annually, he shall not be restrained for more than twenty-four hours without being charged with a definite offence, nor shall he be remanded for a longer period than eight days without his consent, nor imprisoned for more than three months without a trial.

At a reasonable time before his trial, he shall be furnished with a copy of the evidence which it is proposed to use against him.

At the end of the three months period, if he has not been tried and sentenced by due process of the law, he shall be acquitted and released.

No man shall be charged more than once for the same offence.

Although he is open to the free criticism of his fellows, a man shall have adequate protection from any misrepresentation that may distress or injure him.

Secret evidence is not permissible. Statements recorded in administrative dossiers shall not be used to justify the slightest infringement of personal liberty.

A dossier is merely a memorandum for administrative use; it shall not be used as evidence without proper confirmation in open court.

## 10.—*Freedom from violence*

No man shall be subjected to any sort of mutilation except with his own deliberate consent, freely given, nor to forcible handling, except in restraint of his own violence, nor to torture, beating or any other physical ill-treatment.

He shall not be subjected to mental distress, or to imprisonment in infected, verminous or otherwise insanitary quarters, or be put into the company of verminous or infectious people.

But if he is himself infectious or a danger to the health of others, he may be cleansed, disinfected, put in quarantine or otherwise restrained so far as may be necessary to prevent harm to his fellows.

No one shall be punished vicariously by the selection, arrest or ill-treatment of hostages.

## 11.—*Right of law-making*

The rights embodied in this Declaration are fundamental and inalienable.

In conventional and in administrative matters, but in no others, it is an obvious practical necessity for men to limit the free play of certain of these fundamental rights.

(In, for example, such conventional matters as the rule of the road or the protection of money from forgery, and in such administrative matters as town and country planning, or public hygiene.)

No law, conventional or administrative, shall be binding on any man or any section of the community unless it has been made openly with the active or tacit acquiescence of every adult citizen concerned, given either by direct majority vote of the community affected or by a majority vote of his representatives publicly elected.

These representatives shall be ultimately responsible for all by-laws and for detailed interpretations made in the execution of the law.

In matters of convention and collective action, man must abide by the majority decisions ascertained by electoral methods which give effective expression to individual choice. All legislation must be subject to public discussion, revision or repeal. No treaties or contracts shall be made secretly in the name of the community.

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The fount of legislation in a free world is the whole people, and since life flows on constantly to new citizens, no generation can, in whole or in part, surrender or delegate this legislative power, inalienably inherent in mankind.

Such is the Sankey Declaration of Rights. It is necessary and it is acceptable. It can be a very potent instrument indeed in the present phase of human affairs. Incorporate that in your peace treaties and articles of federation, I would say, and you will have a firm foundation, which will continually grow firmer, for the fearless cosmopolitan life of a new world order. You will never get that order without some such document. It is the missing key to endless contemporary difficulties.

And if we, the virtuous democracies, are not fighting for these common human rights, then what in the name of the nobility and gentry, the Crown and the Established Church, the City, *The Times* and the Army and Navy Club, are we common British peoples fighting for?

### § 37

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AND HAVING COMPLETED OUR sketch of what the saner elements in human society may reasonably work for and hope for, having cleared away the horrible nightmares of the class-war and the totalitarian slave-state from our imaginations, we are able to attack the immediate riddles of international conflict and relationship with some hope of a general solution. If we realise to the depths of our being that a world settlement based in the three ideas of socialism, law and knowledge, is not only possible and desirable, but the only way of escape from deepening disaster, then manifestly our attitude towards the resentments of Germany, the prejudices of America or Russia, the poverty and under-nourishment of India or the ambitions of Japan, must be frankly opportunist. None of these are primary issues. We sane men must never lose sight of our ultimate objective, but our methods of getting there will have to vary with the fluctuating variations of national feeling and national policy.

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There is this idea of federation upon which I have already submitted a criticism in §§ 6 and 7 and § 33. As I have shown there, the Streit proposals will either take you further or land you nowhere. Let us assume that we can strengthen his proposals to the extent of making a socialistic economic consortium and adhesion to that Declaration of Rights primary conditions for any federal union; then it becomes a matter of mood and occasion with what communities the federal association may be begun. We can even encourage feeble federal experiments which do not venture even so far as that along the path to sanity, in the certainty that either they will fade out again or else that they will become liberal realities of the type to which the whole world must ultimately conform. Behind any such half-hearted tentatives an educational propaganda can be active and effective.

But when it comes to the rate and amount of participation in the construction of a rational world order we can expect from any country or group of countries, we are in a field where there is little more than guessing and haphazard generalisations about "national character" to work upon. We are dealing with masses of people which may be swayed enormously by a brilliant newspaper or an outstandingly persuasive or compelling personality or by almost accidental changes in the drift of events. I, for example, cannot tell how far the generality of educated and capable people in the British dominions now may fall in with our idea of accepting and serving a collectivism, or how strong their conservative resistance may be. It is my own country, and I ought to know it best, and I do not know it detachedly enough or deeply enough to decide that. I do not see how anyone can foretell these swirls and eddies of response.

The advocacy of such movements of the mind and will as I am speaking of here is in itself among the operating causes in political adjustment, and those who are deepest in the struggle are least able to estimate how it is going. Every factor in political and international affairs is a fluctuating factor. The wise man therefore will not set his heart upon any particular drift or combination. He will favour everything that trends towards the end at which he aims.

The present writer cherishes the idea that the realisation of a common purpose and a common cultural inheritance may

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spread throughout all the English-speaking communities, and there can be no harm in efforts to give this concrete expression. He believes the present dissociation of the British Empire heralds this great synthesis. At the same time there are factors making for some closer association of the United States of America with what are called the Oslo powers. There is no reason why one of these associations should stand in the way of the other. Some countries such as Canada rest already under what is practically a double guarantee; she has the security of the Monroe Doctrine and the protection of the British fleet and her own courage and resources.

A Germany of eighty million people which has been brought to acquiesce in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and which is already highly collectivised, may come much earlier to a completely liberal socialist regime than Great Britain or France. She may enter upon a phase of social and economic recovery so rapid as to stimulate and react upon every other country in the world. It is not for other countries to dictate her internal politics, and if the German people want to remain united as one people, in federated states or in one centralised state, there is neither righteousness nor wisdom in preventing their economic and cultural association under the common federal guarantee.

The Germans like the rest of the world have to get on with collectivisation, they have to produce their pattern, and they cannot give themselves to that if they are artificially divided up and disorganised by some old-fashioned Quai d'Orsay scheme. They must do the right thing in their own way.

That the belligerent tradition may linger on in Germany for a generation or so is a risk the Atlantic powers have to take. The world has a right to insist that not simply some German government but the people generally recognised, unequivocally and repeatedly, the rights of man asserted in the Declaration, and it is reasonable to insist also that Germany remain entirely disarmed and that any aggressive plant, any war plane, warship, gun or arsenal that is discovered in the country shall be destroyed forthwith, brutally and completely. But that is a thing that should not be confined to Germany. Germany should not be singled out for that. Armament should be an illegality everywhere, and some sort of international force should patrol a treaty-bound world.



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Partial armament is one of those absurdities dear to moderate-minded "reasonable" men. Armament itself is making war. Making a gun, pointing a gun and firing it, are all acts of the same order. It should be illegal to construct anywhere upon earth any mechanism for the specific purpose of killing men. When you see a gun it is reasonable to ask: "Whom is that intended to kill?"

Germany's rearmament after 1918 was largely tolerated because she played off British Russophobia against the Russian fear of "Capitalist" attack, but that excuse can no longer serve any furtive war-mongers among her people after her pact with Moscow.

Released from the economic burthens and restrictions that crippled her recovery after 1918, Germany may find an escape for the energy of her young men in her systematic collectivisation, raising the standard of her common life deliberately and steadily, and obliging the maundering "politics" and discursive inattention of the Atlantic world to remain concentrated upon the realities of life. The idea of again splitting up Germany into discordant fragments simply in order to postpone her ultimate recovery is diametrically opposed to world reconstruction. We have need of the peculiar qualities of her people, and the sooner she recovers the better for the whole world. It is preposterous to resume the policy of holding back Germany simply that the old order may enjoy a few more years of self-indulgence in England, France and America. Equally preposterous is it to leave her in possession of the machinery she has stolen and the foreign industries she has deliberately murdered, to disregard the natural gravitation of the economic life in the Slavonic states towards the developing pattern of the Soviet Union. Russia is likely to have something quite emphatic to say to this idea of presenting Germany with the economic hegemony of Europe to sustain that obsolete notion of a "balance of power". The sane man to-day has to watch the activities of his own Foreign Office with incessant jealousy for signs of that Machiavellian spirit which foment division among foreign governments and peoples and schemes perpetually to frustrate the progressive movement in human affairs by converting it into a swaying indecisive balance of power.

This book is a discussion of guiding principles and not of the endless specific problems of adjustment that arise on the

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way to a world realisation of collective unity. I will merely glance at that old idea of Napoleon the Third's, the Latin Union, at the possibility of a situation in Spanish and Portuguese South America parallel to that overlap of the Monroe Doctrine and the European motherlands which already exists in practice in the case of Canada, nor will I expatiate upon the awakening possibilities of a sincere application of the Sankey Declaration of the Rights of Man to India and Africa—and particularly to those parts of the world in which more or less black peoples are awakening to the realities of racial discrimination and oppression.

I will utter a passing warning against any Machiavellian treatment of the problem of Northern and Eastern Asia, into which the constitutional Russophobia of our Tory reactionaries may still lead us. Soviet collectivism, especially if it becomes liberalised and more efficient through a recovery from its doctrinaire obsession by the Communist Party, may spread very effectively across Central Asia and China. To anyone nourished mentally upon the idea of an unending competition of Powers for ascendancy for ever and ever, an alliance with Japan, as truculent and militarised a Japan as possible, will seem the most natural response in the world. But to anyone who has grasped the reality of the present situation of mankind and the urgent desirableness of world collectivisation, this immense unification will be something to welcome, criticise and assist.

The old bugbear of Russia's "designs upon India" may also play its part in distorting the Asiatic situation for many people. Yet a hundred years of mingled neglect, exploitation and occasional outbreaks of genuine helpfulness should have taught the British that the ultimate fate of India's hundreds of millions rests now upon no conquering ruler but wholly and solely upon the ability of the Indian peoples to co-operate in world collectivisation. They may learn much by way of precept and example from Russia and from the English-speaking world, but the days for mere revolt or for relief by a change of masters have passed. India has to work out for itself, with its own abundant brains, its escape from chaos and its own manner of participation in the struggle for a world order, starting from the British raj as a datum line. No outside power can work that out for the Indian peoples, nor force them to do it if they have no will for it.

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But I will not wander further among these ever-changing problems and possibilities. They are, so to speak, wayside eventualities and opportunities. Immense though some of them are they remain secondary. Every year or so now the shifting channels of politics need to be recharted. The activities and responses of the sane man in any particular country and at any particular time will be determined always by the overruling conception of a secular movement towards a single world order. That will be the underlying permanent objective of all his political life.

There is, however, another conception of world consolidation, a conception of what we may call *ad hoc* international system. The essential idea of *ad hoc* internationalism is admirably set forth in Leonard Woolf's *International Government*, a classic which was published in 1916 and still makes profitable reading.

The typical *ad hoc* organisation is the Postal Union, which David Lubin, that brilliant neglected thinker, would have had extended until it controlled shipping and equalised freights throughout the world. He based his ideas upon his practical experience of the mail order business from which he derived his very considerable fortune. From that problem of freight adjustment he passed to the idea of a controlled survey of world production week by week and month by month, so that a shortage here or a glut there could be foreseen and remedied in time. He realised the idea in the form of the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome, which in its heyday made treaties like an independent sovereign power for the supply of returns from nearly every government upon earth. The war of 1914 and Lubin's death in 1919 checked the development of this admirable and most inspiring experiment in *ad hoc* internationalism. Its history is surely something that should be made part of the compulsory education of every statesman and publicist. Yet never in my life have I met a professional politician who knew anything whatever or wanted to know anything about it. It didn't get votes; it seemed difficult to tax it; what was the good of it?

Another *ad hoc* organisation which might be capable of a considerable extension of its functions is the Elder Brethren of Trinity House, who control the lighthouses and charting of the seas throughout the world. But it would need a very

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considerable revision and extension of Mr. Woolf's book and, in spite of the war stresses that have delayed and in some cases reversed their development, it would be quite beyond our present scope to bring up to date the lengthening tale of *ad hoc* international networks, ranging from international business cartels, scientific and technical organisations, white-slave-trade suppression and international police co-operation, to health services and religious missions. Just as I have suggested that the United States and Great Britain may become complete socialisms unawares, so it is a not altogether impossible dream that the world may discover to its great surprise that it is already practically a cosmopolis, through the extension and interweaving of these *ad hoc* co-operations. At any rate we have this very powerful collateral process going on side by side with the more definite political schemes we have discussed.

Surveying the possibilities of these various attacks upon the complicated and intricate obstacles that stand between us and a new and more hopeful world order, one realises both the reasons for hope in that great possibility and the absurdity of over-confidence. We are all like soldiers upon a vast battlefield; we cannot be sure of the trend of things; we may be elated when disillusionment is rushing headlong upon us; we may be on the verge of despair, not knowing that our antagonists are already in collapse. My own reactions vary between an almost mystical faith in the ultimate triumph of human reason and good-will, and moods of stoical determination to carry on to the end in the face of what looks like inevitable disaster. There are quantitative factors in the outlook for which there are no data; there are elements of time and opportunity beyond any estimating. Every one of these activities we have been canvassing tends to delay the drift to destruction and provides a foothold for a further counter-offensive against the adversary.

In the earlier moiety of this book, *The Fate of Homo Sapiens*, I tried to drive home the fact that our species has no more reason to believe it can escape defeat and extinction than any other organism that plays or has played its part in the drama of life. I tried to make clear how precarious is our present situation, and how urgent it is that we should make a strenuous effort at adjustment now. Only a little while ago it seemed as though that was an appeal to a deaf and blind

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world, invincibly set in its habitual ways even if they led plainly to destruction. I went into the question whether this inclination towards pessimism reflected a mood or phase in myself, and I threw out a qualifying suggestion or so; but for my own part I could not find any serious reason to believe that the mental effort that was clearly necessary if man was to escape the fate that marched upon him would ever be made. His conservative resistances, his apathy, seemed incurable.

Now suddenly everywhere one meets with alarmed and open and enquiring minds. So far the tremendous dislocations of the present war have been immensely beneficial in stripping off what seemed to be quite invincible illusions of security only a year ago. I never expected to live to see the world with its eyes as widely open as they are to-day. The world has never been so awake. Little may come of it, much may come of it. We do not know. Life would amount to nothing at all if we did.

### § 38

#### WORLD ORDER IN BEING

THERE WILL BE NO day of days then when a new world order comes into being. Step by step and here and there it will arrive, and even as it comes into being it will develop fresh perspectives, discover unsuspected problems and go on to new adventures. No man, no group of men, will ever be singled out as its father or founder. For its maker will be not this man nor that man nor any man but Man, that being who is in some measure in every one of us. World order will be, like science, like most inventions, a social product, an innumerable number of personalities will have lived fine lives, pouring their best into the collective achievement.

We can find a small-scale parallel to the probable development of a new world order in the history of flying. Less than a third of a century ago, ninety-nine people out of a hundred would have told you that flying was impossible; kites and balloons, and possibly even a navigable balloon, they could imagine; they had known of such things for a hundred years; but a

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heavier than air machine, flying in defiance of wind and gravity ! that they *knew* was nonsense. The would-be aviator was the typical comic inventor. Any fool could laugh at him. Now consider how completely the air is conquered.

And who did it ? Nobody and everybody. Twenty thousand brains or so, each contributing a notion, a device, an amplification. They stimulated one another ; they took off from one another. They were like excited ganglia in a larger brain sending their impulses to and fro. They were people of the most diverse race and colour. You can write down perhaps a hundred people or so who have figured conspicuously in the air, and when you examine the rôle they have played, you will find for the most part that they are mere notorieties of the Lindbergh type who have put themselves modestly but firmly in the lime-light and can lay no valid claim to any effective contribution whatever. You will find many disputes about records and priority in making this or that particular step, but the lines of suggestion, the growth and elaboration of the idea, have been an altogether untraceable process. It has been going on for not more than a third of a century, under our very eyes, and no one can say precisely how it came about. One man said "Why not this ?" and tied it, and another said "Why not that ?" A vast miscellany of people had one idea in common, an idea as old as Dædalus, the idea that "Man can fly". Suddenly, swiftly, it *got about*—that is the only phrase you can see—that flying was attainable. And man, man as a social being, turned his mind to it seriously, and flew.

So it will certainly be with the new world order, if ever it is attained. A growing miscellany of people are saying—it is *getting about*—that "World Pax is possible", a World Pax in which men will be both united and free and creative. It is of no importance at all that nearly every man of fifty and over receives the idea with a pitying smile. Its chief dangers are the dogmatist and the would-be "leader" who will try to suppress every collateral line of work which does not minister to his supremacy. This movement must be, and it must remain, many-headed. Suppose the world had decided that Santos Dumont or Hiram Maxim was the heaven-sent Master of the Air, had given him the right to appoint a successor and subjected all experiments to his inspired control. We should probably have the Air Master now, with an applauding retinue of yes-men.

following the hops of some clumsy, useless and extremely dangerous apparatus across country with the utmost dignity and self-satisfaction. . . .

Yet that is precisely how we still set about our political and social problems.

Bearing this essential fact in mind that the Peace of Man can only be attained, if it is attained at all, by an advance upon a long and various front, at varying speed and with diverse equipment, keeping direction only by a common faith in the triple need for collectivism, law and research, we realise the impossibility of drawing any picture of the new order as though it was as settled and stable as the old order imagined itself to be. The new order will be incessant; things will never stop happening, and so it defies any Utopian description. But we may nevertheless assemble a number of possibilities that will be increasingly realisable as the tide of disintegration ebbs and the new order is revealed.

To begin with we have to realise certain peculiarities of human behaviour that are all too disregarded in general political speculation. We have considered the very important role that may be played in our contemporary difficulties by a clear statement of the Rights of Man, and we have sketched such a Declaration. There is not an item in that Declaration, I believe, which a man will not consider to be a reasonable demand—so far as he himself is concerned. He will subscribe to it in that spirit very readily. But when he is asked not only to subscribe to it as something he has to concede by that same gesture to everybody else in the world, but as something for which he has to make all the sacrifices necessary for its practical realisation, he will discover a reluctance to “go so far as that”. He will find a serious resistance welling up from his sub-conscious and trying to justify itself in his thoughts.

The things he will tell you will be very variable; but the word “premature” will play a large part in it. He will display a tremendous tenderness and consideration with which you have never credited him before, for servants, for workers, for aliens and particularly for aliens of a different colour from himself. They will hurt themselves with all this dangerous liberty. Are they *fit*, he will ask you, for all this freedom? “Candidly, are they fit for it?” He will be slightly offended if you will say, “As fit as you are”. He will say in a slightly amused tone, “But

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how *can* you say that ? ” and then going off rather at a tangent, “ I am afraid you idealise your fellow-creatures ”.

As you press him, you will find this kindliness evaporating from his resistance altogether. He is now concerned about the general beauty and loveliness of the world. He will protest that his new Magna Carta will reduce all the world to “ a dead level of uniformity ”. You will ask him why must a world of free-men be uniform and at a dead level ? You will get no adequate reply. It is an assumption of vital importance to him and he must cling to it. He has been accustomed to associate “ free ” and “ equal ”, and has never been bright-minded enough to take these two words apart and have a good look at them separately. He is likely to fall back at this stage upon that Bible of the impotent genteel, Huxley’s *Brave New World*, and implore you to read it. You brush that disagreeable fantasy aside and continue to press him. He says that nature has made men unequal, and you reply that that is no reason for exaggerating the fact. The more unequal and various their gifts, the greater is the necessity for a Magna Carta to protect them from one another. Then he will talk of robbing life of the picturesque and the romantic and you will have some difficulty in getting these words defined. Sooner or later it will grow clear that he finds the prospect of a world in which “ Jack’s as good as his Master ” unpleasant to the last degree.

If you still probe him with questions and leading suggestions, you will begin to realise how large a part the *need for glory over his fellows* plays in his composition (and incidentally you will note, please, your own secret satisfaction in carrying the argument against him). It will become clear to you, if you collate the specimen under examination with the behaviour of children, yourself and the people about you, under what urgent necessity they are for the sense of triumph, of being better and doing better than their fellows, and having it felt and recognised by someone. It is a deeper, steadier impulse than sexual lust ; it is a hunger. It is the clue to the unlovingness of so much sexual life, to sadistic impulses, to avarice, hoarding and endless ungainful cheating and treachery which gives men the sense of getting the better of someone even if they do not get the upper hand.

In the last resort this is why we must have law, and why Magna Carta and all its kindred documents set out to defeat



human nature in defence of the general happiness. Law is essentially an adjustment of that craving to glory over other living things to the needs of social life, and it is more necessary in a collectivist society than in any other. It is a bargain, it is a social contract, to do as we would be done by and to repress our extravagant egotisms in return for reciprocal concessions. And in the face of these considerations we have advanced about the true nature of the beast we have to deal with, it is plain that the politics of the sane man, as we have reasoned them out, must anticipate a strenuous opposition to this primary vital implement for bringing about the new world order.

I have suggested that the current discussion of "War Aims" may very effectively be transformed into the propaganda of this new Declaration of the Rights of Man. The opposition to it and the attempts that will be made to postpone, mitigate, stifle and evade it, need to be watched, denounced and combated persistently throughout the world. I do not know how far this Declaration I have sketched can be accepted by a good Catholic, but the Totalitarian pseudo-philosophy insists upon inequality of treatment for "non-Aryans" as a glorious duty. How Communists would respond to its clauses would, I suppose, depend upon their orders from Moscow. But what are called the "democracies" are supposed to be different, and it would be possible now to make that Declaration a searching test of the honesty and spirit of the leaders and rulers in whom they trust. These rulers can be brought to the point by it, with a precision unattainable in any other fashion.

But the types and characters and authorities and officials and arrogant and aggressive individuals who will boggle at this Declaration and dispute and defy it, do not exhaust the resistances of our unregenerate natures to this implement for the establishment of elementary justice in the world. For a far larger proportion of people among the "democracies" will be found who will pay it lip service and then set about discovering how, in their innate craving for that sense of superiority and advantage which lies so near the core of our individual wills, they may unobtrusively sabotage it and cheat it. Even if they only cheat it just a little. I am inclined to think this disingenuousness is a universal weakness. I have a real passion for serving the world, but I have a pretty keen disposition to get more pay for my service, more recognition and so on than I

deserve. I do not trust myself. I want to be under just laws. We want law because we are all potential law-breakers.

This is a considerable digression into psychology, and I will do no more than glance at how large a part this craving for superiority and mastery has played in the sexual practices of mankind. There we have the ready means for a considerable relief of this egotistical tension in mutual boasting and reassurance. But the motive for this digression here is to emphasise the fact that the generalisation of our "War Aims" into a Declaration of Rights, though it will enormously simplify the issue of the war, will eliminate neither open and heartfelt opposition nor endless possibilities of betrayal and sabotage.

Nor does it alter the fact that even when the struggle seems to be drifting definitely towards a world social democracy, there may still be very great delays and disappointments before it becomes an efficient and beneficent world system. Countless people, from maharajas to millionaires and from pukka sahibs to pretty ladies, will hate the new world order, be rendered unhappy by the frustration of their passions and ambitions through its advent and will die protesting against it. When we attempt to estimate its promise we have to bear in mind the distress of a generation or so of malcontents, many of them quite gallant and graceful-looking people.

And it will be no light matter to minimise the loss of efficiency in the process of changing the spirit and pride of administrative work from that of an investing, high-salaried man with a handsome display of expenditure and a socially ambitious wife, into a relatively less highly-salaried man with a higher standard of self-criticism, aware that he will be esteemed rather by what he puts into his work than by what he gets out of it. There will be a lot of social spill, tragi-comedy and loss of efficiency during the period of the change over, and it is better to be prepared for that.

Yet after making allowances for these transitional stresses we may still look forward with some confidence to certain phases in the onset of World Order. War or war fear will have led everywhere to the concentration of vast numbers of workers upon munition work and the construction of offensive and defensive structures of all sorts, upon shipping, internal communications, replacement structures, fortifications. There will be both a great accumulation and control of material and construc-

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tive machinery and also of hands already growing accustomed to handling it. As the possibility of conclusive victory fades and this war muddle passes out of its distinctively military phase towards revolution, and as some sort of Peace Congress assembles, it will be not only desirable but necessary for governments to turn over these resources and activities to social reconstruction. It will be too obviously dangerous and wasteful to put them out of employment. They must surely have learnt now what unemployment means in terms of social disorganisation. Governments will have to lay out the world, plan and build for peace whether they like it or not.

But it will be asked, "Where will you find the credit to do that?" and to answer this question we must reiterate the fact that money is an expedient and not an end. The world will have the material and the hands needed for a reconditioning of its life everywhere. They are all about you now crying out to be used. It is, or at any rate it has been, the function of the contemporary money-credit system to bring worker and material together and stimulate their union. That system always justified its activities on that ground, that is its claim to exist, and if it does not exist for that purpose then for what purpose does it exist and what further need is there for it? If now the financial mechanism will not work, if it confronts us with a *non possumus*, then clearly it resigns its function.

Then it has to get out of the way. It will declare the world has stopped when the truth will be that the City has stopped. It is the counting-house that has gone bankrupt. For a long time now an increasing number of people have been asking questions about the world counting-house, getting down at last to such fundamental questions as "What is money?" and "Why are Banks?" It is disconcerting but stimulating to find that no lucid answer is forthcoming.

One might have imagined that long before this one of the many great bankers and financial experts in our world would have come forward with a clear and simple justification for the monetary practices of to-day. He would have shown how completely reasonable and trustworthy this money-credit system was. He would have shown what was temporarily wrong with it and how to set it working again, as the electrician does when the lights go out. He would have released us from our deepening distress about our money in the Bank, our little squirrel

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hoard of securities, the deflating lifebelt of property that was to assure our independence to the end. No one of that quality comes forward. There is not so much as a latter-day Bagehot. It dawns upon more and more of us that it is not a system at all and never has been a system, that it is an accumulation of conventions, usages, collateral developments and compensatory expedients, which creaks now and sways more and more and gives every sign of a complete and horrifying social collapse.

Most of us have believed up to the last moment that somewhere distributed among the banks and city offices, in a sort of world counting-house, there were books of accounts, multitudinous perhaps and intricate, but ultimately proper accounts. Only now is it dawning upon comfortable decent people that the counting-house is in a desperate mess, that codes seem to have been lost, entries made wrong, additions gone astray down the column, records kept in vanishing ink. . . .

For years there has been a great and growing literature about money. It is very various but it has one general characteristic. First there is a swift exposure of the existing system as wrong. Then there is a glib demonstration of a new system which is right. Let this be done or that be done, "let the nation own its own money", says one radio prophet earnestly, repeatedly, simply, and all will be well. These various systems of doctrine run periodicals, organise movements (with coloured shirt complete), meet, demonstrate. They disregard each other completely and contradict each other flatly. And without exception all these monetary reformers betray signs of extreme mental strain.

The secret trouble in their minds is a gnawing doubt that their own proper "plan", the panacea, is in some subtle and treacherous way likely to fail them if it is put to the test. The internal fight against this intolerable shadow betrays itself in their outer behaviour. Their letters and pamphlets, with scarcely an exception, have this much in common with the letters one gets from lunatics, that there is a continual resort to capital letters and abusive terms. They shout out at the slightest provocation or none. They are not so much shouting at the exasperating reader who remains so obstinate when they have been so clear, so clear, as at the sceptical whisper within.

Because there is no perfect money system by itself and there never can be. It is a dream like the elixir vitæ or perpetual

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motion. It is in the same order of thought.

Attention has already been drawn, in our examination of Mr. Streit's proposals for *Union Now*, to the fact that money varies in its nature and operations with the theory of property and distribution on which society is based, that in a complete collectivism for example it becomes little more than the cheque handed to the worker to enable him to purchase whatever he likes from the resources of the community. Every detachment of production or enterprise from collective control (national or cosmopolitan) increases the possible functions of money and so makes a different thing of it. Thus there can be endless species of money—as many types of money as there are types and varieties of social order. Money in Soviet Russia is a different organ from money in Nazi Germany, and that again is different from French or American money. The difference can be as wide as that between lungs and swimming bladders and gills. It is not simply a quantitative difference, as so many people seem to imagine, which can be adjusted by varying the rate of exchange or any such contrivance, it goes deeper, it is a difference in quality and kind. The bare thought of that makes our business and financial people feel uncomfortable and confused and menaced, and they go on moving their bars of gold about from this vault to that, hoping almost beyond hope that no one will say anything more about it. It worked very well for a time, to go on as though money were the same thing all the world over. They will not admit how that assumption is failing to work now.

Clever people reaped a certain advantage from a more or less definite apprehension of the variable nature of money, but since one could not be a financier or business director without an underlying faith in one's right to profit by one's superior cleverness, there did not seem to be any reason for them to make a public fuss about it. They got their profits and the flats got left.

Directly we grasp this not very obscure truth that there can be, and are, different sorts of money dependent on the economic usages or system in operation, which are not really interchangeable, then it becomes plain that a collectivist world order, whose fundamental law is such a Declaration of Rights as we have sketched, will have to carry on its main, its primary operations at least with a new world money, a specially contrived

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money, differing in its nature from any sort of money conventions that have hitherto served human needs. It will be issued against the total purchasable output of the community in return for the workers' services to the community. There will be no more reason for going to the City for a loan than for going to the oracle at Delphi for advice about it.

In the phase of social stress and emergency socialisation into which we are certainly passing, such a new money may begin to appear quite soon. Governments finding it impossible to resort to the tangled expedients of the financial counting-house, may take a short-cut to recuperation, requisition the national resources within their reach and set their unemployed hands to work by means of these new checks. They may carry out international barter arrangements upon an increasing scale. The fact that the counting-house is in a hopeless mess because of its desperate attempts to ignore the protean nature of money will become more manifest as it becomes less important.

The Stock Exchange and Bank credit and all the arts of loaning and usury and forestalling will certainly dwindle away together as the World Order establishes itself. If and when World Order establishes itself. They will be superseded, like egg-shells and foetal membranes. There is no reason for denouncing those who devised and worked those methods and institutions as scoundrels and villains. They did honestly according to their lights. They were a necessary part of the process of getting *Homo sapiens* out of his cave and down from his tree. And gold, that lovely heavy stuff, will be released from its vaults and hiding-places for the use of the artist and technician—probably at a price considerably below the present quotations.

Our attempt to forecast the coming World Order is framed then in an immense and increasing spectacle of constructive activity. We can anticipate a rapid transfiguration of the face of the earth as its population is distributed and redistributed in accordance with the shifting requirements of economic production.

It is not only that there is what is called a housing shortage in nearly every region of the earth, but most of the existing accommodation, by modern standards, is unfit for human occupation. There is scarcely a city in the world, the new world as well as the old, which does not need to have half its

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dwelling-places destroyed. Perhaps Stockholm, reconditioned under a Socialist regime, may claim to be an exception ; Vienna was doing hopefully until its spirit was broken by Dollfuß and the Catholic reaction. For the rest, behind a few hundred main avenues and prospects, sea and river fronts, capitols, castles and the like, filthy slums and rookeries cripple childhood and degrade and devitalise its dulled elders. You can hardly say people are born into such surroundings ; they are only half born.

With the co-operation of the press and the cinema it would be easy to engender a world-wide public interest and enthusiasm for the new types of home and fitment that are now attainable by everyone. Here would be an outlet for urban and regional patriotism, for local shame and pride and effort. Here would be stuff to argue about. Wherever men and women have been rich enough, powerful enough and free enough, their thoughts have turned to architecture and gardening. Here would be a new incentive to travel, to see what other towns and countryside were doing. The common man on his holidays would do what the English milord of the seventeenth century did ; he would make his Grand Tour and come back from his journeys with architectural drawings and notions for home application. And this building and rebuilding would be a continuing process, a sustained employment, going on from good to better, as the economic forces shifted and changed with new discoveries and men's ideas expanded.

It is doubtful in a world of rising needs and standards if many people would want to live in manifestly old houses, any more than they would want to live in old clothes. Except in a few country places where ancient buildings have wedded themselves happily to some local loveliness and become quasi-natural things, or where some great city has shown a brave facade to the world, I doubt if there will be much to preserve. In such large open countries as the United States there has been a considerable development of the mobile home in recent years. People haul a trailer-home behind their cars and become seasonal nomads. . . . But there is no need to expatiate further on a limitless wealth of possibilities. Thousands of those who have been assisting in the monstrous clumsy evacuations and shiftings of population that have been going on recently, must have had their imaginations stirred by dim realisation of how much better all this might be done, if it were done in a new spirit and with

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a different intention. There must be a multitude of young and youngish people quite ripe for infection by this idea of cleaning up and resettling the world. Young men who are now poring over war maps and planning annexations and strategic boundaries, fresh Maginot lines, new Gibaltars and Dardanelles, may presently be scheming the happy and healthy distribution of routes and residential districts in relation to this or that important region of world supply for oil or wheat or water-power. It is essentially the same type of cerebration, better employed.

Considerations of this sort are sufficient to supply a background of hopeful activities to our prospective world order. But we are not all architects and gardeners; there are many types of minds, and many of those who are training or being trained for the skilled co-operations of warfare and the development of a combatant morale may be more disposed to go on with definitely educational work. In that way they can most easily gratify the craving for power and honourable service. They will face a world in extreme need of more teachers, and fresh-minded and inspiring teachers at that. At every level of educational work from the kindergarten to the research laboratory, and in every part of the world, from Capricornia to Alaska and from the Gold Coast to Japan, there will be need of active workers to bring minds into harmony with the new order, and to work out, with all the labour-saving and multiplying apparatus available, cinema, radio, cheap books and pictures and all the rest of it, the endless new problems of human liaison that will arise. There we have a second line of work along which millions of young people may escape the stagnation and frustration which closed in upon their predecessors as the old order drew to its end.

A sturdy and assertive variety of the new young will be needed for the police work of the world. They will be more disposed for authority and less for teaching or creative activities than their fellows. The old proverb will still hold for the new order that it takes all sorts to make a world, and the alternative to driving this type of temperament into conspiracy and fighting it and, if you can, suppressing it, is to employ it, win it over, trust it, and give it law behind it to respect and enforce. They want a loyalty, and this loyalty will find its best use and satisfaction in the service of world order. I have remarked, in the course of such air travel as I have done, that the airmen of all nations have a common resemblance to each other and that the



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patriotic virus in their blood is largely corrected by a wider professionalism. At present the outlook before a young airman is to perish in a spectacular dog-fight before he is five and twenty. I wonder how many of them really rejoice in that prospect.

It is not unreasonable to anticipate the development of an *ad hoc* disarmament police which will have its greatest strength in the air. How easily the spirit of an air police can be denationalised is shown by the instance of the air patrols on the United States-Canadian border, to which President Roosevelt drew my attention. There is a lot of smuggling along that border and the planes now play an important part in its suppression. At first the United States and Canada had each their own planes. Then, in a wave of common sense, the two services were pooled. Each plane now carries a United States and a Canadian customs officer. When contraband is spotted the plane comes down on it and which officer acts is determined by the destination of the smuggled goods. There we have a pattern for a world struggling through federation to collective unity. An *ad hoc* disarmament police with its main strength in the air would necessarily fall into close co-operation with the various other world police activities. In a world where criminals can fly anywhere the police must be able to fly anywhere too. Already we have a world-wide network of competent men fighting the white-slave traffic, the drug traffic and so forth. The thing begins already.

All this I write to provide imaginative material for those who see the coming order as a mere blank interrogation. People talk much nonsense about the disappearance of incentive under socialism. The exact opposite is the truth. It is the obstructive appropriation of natural resources by private ownership that robs the prosperous of incentive and the poor of hope. The Sankey Declaration of Human Rights assures a man the proper satisfaction of all his elementary needs *in kind*, and nothing more. If he wants more than that he will have to work for it, and the healthier he is and the better he is fed and housed, the more bored he will be by inactivity and the more he will want something to do. I am suggesting what he is likely to do in general terms, and that is as much as one can do now. We can talk about the broad principles upon which these matters will be handled in a consolidating world socialism, but we can scarcely venture to anticipate the detailed forms, the

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immense richness and variety of expression, an ever-increasing number of intelligent people will impose upon these primary ideas.

But there is one more structural suggestion that it may be necessary to bring into our picture. So far as I know it was first broached by that very bold and subtle thinker, Professor William James, in a small book entitled *The Moral Equivalent of War*. He pointed out the need there might be for a conception of duty, side by side with the idea of rights, that there should be something in the life of every citizen, man or woman alike, that should give him at once a sense of personal obligation to the World State and personal ownership in the World State. He brought that into relation with the fact that there will remain in any social order we can conceive, a multitude of necessary services which by no sort of device can be made attractive as normal life-long occupations. He was not thinking so much of the fast-vanishing problem of mechanical toil as of such irksome tasks at the prison warder's, the asylum attendant's; the care of the aged and infirm, nursing generally, health and sanitary services, a certain residuum of clerical routine, dangerous exploration and experiment. No doubt human goodness is sufficient to supply volunteers for many of these things, but are the rest of us entitled to profit by their devotion? His solution is universal conscription for a certain period of the adult life. The young will have to do so much service and take so much risk for the general welfare as the world common-weal requires. They will be able to do these jobs with the freshness and vigour of those who know they will presently be released, and who find their honour in a thorough performance; they will not be subjected to that deadening temptation to self-protective slacking and mechanical insensitiveness which assails all who are thrust by economic necessity into these callings for good and all.

It is quite possible that a certain percentage of these conscripts may be caught by the interest of what they are doing; the asylum attendant may decide to specialise in psycho-therapeutic work; the hospital nurse succumb to that curiosity which underlies the great physiologist; the Arctic worker may fall in love with his snowy wilderness. . . .

One other leading probability of a collectivist world order has to be noted here, and that is an enormous increase in the pace and amount of research and discovery. I write research,

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but by that I mean that double-barrelled attack upon ignorance, the biological attack and the physical attack, that is generally known as "Science". "Science" comes to us from those academic Dark Ages when men had to console themselves for their ignorance by pretending that there was a limited amount of knowledge in the world, and little chaps in caps and gowns strutted about, bachelors who knew a passable lot, masters who knew a tremendous lot and doctors in crimson gowns who knew all that there was to be known. Now it is manifest that none of us know very much, and the more we look into what we think we know, the more hitherto undetected things we shall find lurking in our assumptions.

Hitherto this business of research, which we call the "scientific world", has been in the hands of a very few workers indeed. I throw out the suggestion that in our present-day world, of all the brains capable of great and masterful contributions to "scientific" thought and achievement, brains of the quality of Lord Rutherford's, or Darwin's or Pavlov's or Freud's or Leonardo's or Galileo's, not one in a thousand, not one in a score of thousands, ever gets born into such conditions as to realise its opportunities. The rest never learn a civilised language, never get near a library, never have the faintest chance of self-realisation, never hear the call. They are under-nourished, they die young, they are misused. And of the millions who would make good, useful, eager secondary research workers and explorers, not one in a million is utilised.

But now consider how things will be if we had a stirring education ventilating the whole world, and if we had a systematic and continually more competent search for exceptional mental quality and a continually more extensive net of opportunity for it. Suppose a quickening public mind implies an atmosphere of increasing respect for intellectual achievement and a livelier criticism of imposture. What we call scientific progress to-day would seem a poor, hesitating, uncertain advance in comparison with what would be happening under these happier conditions.

The progress of research and discovery has produced such brilliant and startling results in the past century and a half that few of us are aware of the small number of outstanding men who have been concerned in it, and how the minor figures behind these leaders trail off into a following of timid and ill-

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provided specialists who dare scarcely stand up to a public official on their own ground. This little army, this "scientific world" of to-day, numbering I suppose from head to tail, down to the last bottle-washer, not a couple of hundred thousand men, will certainly be represented in the new world order by a force of millions, better equipped, amply co-ordinated, free to question, able to demand opportunity. Its best will be no better than our best, who could not be better, but they will be far more numerous, and its rank and file, explorers, prospectors, experimental team workers and an encyclopædic host of classifiers and co-ordinators and interpreters, will have a vigour, a pride and confidence that will make the laboratories of to-day seem half-way back to the alchemist's den.

Can one doubt that the "scientific world" will break out in this way when the revolution is achieved, and that the development of man's power over nature and over his own nature and over this still unexplored planet will undergo a continual acceleration as the years pass? No man can guess beforehand what doors will open then nor upon what wonder-lands.

These are some fragmentary intimations of the quality of that wider life a new world order can open to mankind. I will not speculate further about them because I would not have it said that this book is Utopian or "Imaginative" or anything of that sort. I have set down nothing that is not strictly reasonable and practicable. It is the soberest of books and the least original of books. I think I have written enough to show that it is impossible for world affairs to remain at their present level. Either mankind collapses or our species struggles up by the hard yet fairly obvious routes I have collated in this book, to reach a new level of social organisation. There can be little question of the abundance, excitement and vigour of living that awaits our children upon that upland. If it is attained. There is no doubting their degradation and misery if it is not.

There is nothing really novel about this book. But there has been a certain temerity in bringing together facts that many people have avoided bringing together for fear they might form an explosive mixture. Maybe they will. They may blast through some obstinate mental barriers. In spite of that explosive possibility, that explosive necessity, it may be, this remains essentially an assemblage, digest and encouragement of now prevalent but still hesitating ideas. It is a plain statement of the

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revolution to which reason points an increasing number of minds, but which they still lack resolution to undertake. In the first part of this book I have stressed the urgency of the case. In the later chapters I have discussed the things they can and need to do. They had better summon up their resolution.

### § 39

#### RUSSIA, THE WEST AND WORLD REVOLUTION

AND HERE NOW THAT I am revising this book and bringing it up to date, let me add an article I wrote at the Editor's invitation for *Soviet News*, an article which, I am told, was translated and reprinted throughout the Soviet Union.

A supreme necessity of the present time, I wrote, is that the various English-speaking and Russian-speaking communities should come to a common understanding about the human outlook. The pace at which events march on leaves all our mental habits and disciplines behind, and the creeds and formulæ that were vital and inspiring yesterday must needs be brought up to date and up to scale if they are not to encumber human understandings to-day. We have to be brutally free and frank and willing and patient with each other if we are to arrive at any permanent co-operation in the years ahead.

Before 1900 world revolution and a classless world-community of mutual service was a noble aspiration. It has become an imperative necessity. Then it was a defiance of established powers; it had to resort to conspiratorial methods and all the concealments and secret disciplines of a conspiracy. Now it is plain and open to the common sense of mankind and its methods have to be adapted to this new state of affairs.

What has happened are three chief things. Firstly the aeroplane has abolished fronts and frontiers and made the management of human affairs in separate sovereign states, which was unavoidable forty years ago, absurd and impossible. A federal world control of air and sea transport and of the supply of oil and fuel is now imperatively necessary if mankind is to be relieved from the perpetual danger of Blitzkriegs. Secondly, the enormous increase in power production has so released energy

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for exploitation, destruction or creation that it can no longer be left dispersed in the anarchistic hands of nationalists and profiteers. And thirdly, the last excuses for class government have disappeared with the necessary liquidation of illiteracy throughout the world. Ignorant, inadaptable toilers are a mere encumbrance to the modern world community.

It is in strict accordance with the materialistic interpretation of history that social and political ideology should change with changing conditions and that we should be ready and willing to revise or discard the working ideas of the past as new vistas open before us. This applies with equal force to the conservative and liberal ideas of the Western pseudo-democracies and to the formulæ and methods of the Communist Party.

The world owes so much to the reckless self-devotion of the Russian Bolsheviks, they have so consolidated and modernised the Russian republics, that a disposition to adopt and cling to every scrap of their teaching and make it into a new orthodoxy is quite understandable. But it is necessary to remind the Russian reader that every fundamental idea of the Communist Party came first out of the laxer, ampler, freely-thinking world of the West, and that even under the ever-tightening grip of war, that Western World may have something more than bombers, tanks and tractors to offer its valiant allies. I do not know how many Russians have heard of that distinguished American statesman, Mr. Gifford Pinchot, and his scheme for the Federal Conservation of World Resources. It is a scheme of world socialism, and it would have been quite impracticable thirty years ago. The improved methods of survey and record, such experiences as the International Institute of Agriculture and the Chatham House Survey of Africa have demonstrated that now the estimation and control of the world production and distribution of staple goods and the rescue of the common heritage of mankind from the wasteful exploitation of profiteering enterprises is not only practicable but urgently necessary. A continually growing proportion of people in the Western World are awakening to that reality. Nor do members of the Communist Party seem to understand fully that they are far behind the times when they speak of the present struggle as an imperialist war. There is no "British Empire" any longer. In 1922 the Statute of Westminster dissolved the British Empire and replaced it by a confederation of states, so free and independent

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that at the present time, Eire, South Ireland that is, is neutral, and German diplomatists and spies come and go there freely. This is a degree of independence exceeding that of any republic in the U.S.S.R.

Throughout the Western World, in different phraseology and to an increasing degree, the realisation of these fundamental imperatives makes head against the habits, prejudices, short-sighted resistances that we inherit from the past. I spent some months last year lecturing in America on the supreme necessity of complete co-operation with Russia in the war and after the war. I did so against very great opposition. Now it makes me giddy to see how rapidly American and Conservative British thought is spinning round to the new view. Some of that is manifestly insincere, a very temporary conversion, but I think Russians are well informed enough to see through the propaganda, the grins and sentimentalities of the remnants of the old regime. It is the New West you need to understand, the three-fold demand for a world federal control of transport, a world federal control of production and the adoption of the Sankey Declaration of the Rights of Man as a world-wide fundamental law of human equality and freedom.

There has been a First, Second and Third International. There have been attempts to form a Fourth International so that I must leave my numbering of Internationals vague. Let us call it the *Final International*. But plainly we need a new and modernised and re-invigorated International now, to guide us on this next great step forward towards a liberated and unified Earth. It is folly to let differences of dogma and phraseology stand in our way. We world revolutionaries of the West and the East need to get together now, to talk plainly and exhaustively to each other now and to hammer out our common objective in the years ahead.

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*Note 5A.* A shrinkage of the gross population, one may note, under the new conditions, though it foreshadows an ultimate biological defeat, does not in itself compensate for that superfluity of unemployed and dangerously restless young men stressed in the preceding paragraphs. It does nothing to stabilise the community. Not merely increased productivity per head due to technical progress but also the prolonged activity of skilled older people will still be diminishing employment and the young man's prospects of normal assuagement. A falling birth rate or for that matter a rising one is no relief for that primary social tension, which is essentially a matter of proportion and not of scale. An island community of a few hundred people will still be unstable if it includes a few dozen young men with nothing definite to do.

*Note 5B.* Semaphore signalling systems seem only to have been invented in the Napoleonic period, though it is remarkable they were not attempted in the great Empires of Egypt, Persia, China and Rome.

*Note 6A.* It is true that in Great Britain there are certain organisations, the Plebs League, for instance, and the Workers' Educational Association, which owe their existence to the realisation that the traditional education, meeting as it does the requirements for upper and middle-class survival, may not be entirely adequate for the needs of an awakening democracy. But in practice there is little of the interrogative and creative spirit of science in the work of these quasi-rebel bodies. A rash conceit of finality pervades them. One need only turn over the pages of *Plebs* to realise the glib, trite omniscience of its attitude. The aim throughout is not knowledge but equipment for the political class war: it is to assemble and supply predigested controversial material for the Labour politician (research!), prepare and train "speakers" for the Labour cause, and sustain the profound satisfaction of its clientele in such education as they have already derived from the general atmosphere of their upbringing. At a Royal Society Dinner one can stand up and say "We are all self-confessed ignorant men, our common aim is enquiry and better knowledge; we want to know, and that is why we are here together". But that sort of thing would provoke either indignation or derision in the Little Bethel of a workers' educational gathering. 'They have the Gospel; they know. Labour is going to take over things and the millennium will ensue. The Plebs League, it seems, has a doctrinal feud with the kindred Communist Party; I cannot understand why. It preaches practically the same stuff. No seminary for the missionaries of some eccentric sect was ever more specialised and narrow-minded.

*Note 7A.* There is a very full and well-illustrated Italian (Fascist) Encyclopædia—one of the many evidences of the higher mental level of



Christmas in bomb-devastated Madrid, now that Catholicism has waded through blood to its own again. It would be a half-hearted incarnation that did not fully share the anxieties and precautions of our distressful life.

*Note 10B.* Since the § 10 was first drafted, a very revolutionary device has come to hand in Major Muir's invention of the "air mine". This is a balloon-sustained mine which can be set adrift in the air at any level, and which will drift before the wind until it contacts with a plane and destroys it. It is too small to be seen and avoided. It can be timed to keep the air for a definite time, a day or a week or so, and then explode and come down. These air mines are cheap to produce and they could be made quickly and released in enormous quantities. So long as they were up they would make the air impossible for any sort of air transport, civil or military; they would in fact for the time being eliminate the air altogether. I have consulted several authorities in this matter, and they agree upon its entire practicability. But obviously there are considerable obstacles to its being properly tried out. The combatant air forces detest the idea. Still there we have the possibility of putting the air completely out of action whenever we wish it, and of restoring war to its ancient and slower two dimensions.

*Note 11A.* It is the practice of those who find the results of scientific enquiry unpalatable, to stigmatise such statements as we have assembled here as "cocksure" and declare them as dogmatic as any other dogmas. They will make it a personal matter if possible, as though I individually had made it up, or got it wrong, and was being rather absurd about it. And then, "Yah!", and they think no more about these uncongenial things. But I am no more responsible for the facts in this book than a telegraph messenger is for the cable he brings. I have been simply gathering up undisputed statements, and they remain intact, however brilliantly I can be discredited personally.

Alternatively these recalcitrant spirits will have it that it is science which is "cocksure". That is a flat misrepresentation of the scientific spirit. Experimental science, natural science—which is what every one understands by "science" nowadays—is never assured and final. That is where it differs from all other established systems of belief, and that is why I speak of it throughout this book as a new thing in the development of human mentality, new within the past century or so. The true symbol of natural science is a note of interrogation. A better name would be Research. It questions until some false assumption is laid bare or destroyed. It tries out and rejects or accepts. And still it questions. It is rare that it reverses its carefully tested conclusions—it is another defensive invention that "Science is always contradicting itself"—but continually it advances beyond these conclusions and restates with increasing precision and enrichment. The utmost the man of science says to the religious dogmatist is "In view of this and that, your general statement is unsound", or, "In view of this and that it must be untrue".

*Note 11E.* "The number of one's ancestors increases as we look back in time. Disregarding the chances of intermarriage, each one of us had

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two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grand-parents, and so on backward, until very soon, in less than fifty generations, we should find that, but for the qualification introduced, we should have all the earth's inhabitants of that time as our progenitors. For a hundred generations it must hold absolutely true that everyone of that time who has issue living now is ancestral to all of us. That brings the thing quite within the historical period. There is not a palaeolithic or neolithic relic that is not a family relic for every soul alive. The blood in our veins had handled it". (From H. G. Wells, *First and Last Things*, "The Being of Mankind".)

There are, however, certain qualifications to be made to this statement of our common ancestry if it is to pass unchallenged. In every generation there is an elimination of half the genetic elements. The individual is not a mixture of the total ancestry of his four grand-parents. He is a compound of a quarter of their genes. And in addition he may be a mutation. Genes are transmitted in associated groups, but these groups fall infinitely short of carrying a complete personality. They carry traits, but the traits are carried separately. In so-and-so we may remark this and that trait of his Grandfather William but they are mixed with traits from other progenitors; the practical reappearance of Grandfather William is a mathematical improbability verging on the impossible. Of all this and how there are recessive characteristics masked by dominant ones, but capable of reappearing in offspring, the reader will find a clear and full account in *The Science of Life*.

A common ancestry does not therefore involve a common physiology, and at any time an individual or a type may turn up in which some once prevalent type virtually reappears. Mr. George Bernard Shaw, for example, is a very exceptional person to-day, but Etruscan tombs and potsherds reveal a departed world of quasi-George Bernard Shaws. There are quasi-Cromagnards in the Dordogne and the Canary Isles today. Certain regions, certain climates, seem to attract and favour their own special types and tend to revive them. That all English people are descended from William the Conqueror and most of the population of the earth from Abraham, implies brotherhood indeed, but not uniformity. The fact that if humanity survives so long, everyone alive will be the descendant of every fertile individual among us to-day exposes the absurdities of family and national pride, but it does not mean that the dance of the genes will not give us an incessantly restored human variety, in which every individual will be consciously or unconsciously seeking the region, the occupation and the associates most congenial to his make-up.

Note 12A. Some of those who, in spite of much subsequent enlightenment, still cling, out of natural affection and association, to traditions of their home and upbringing that have become a dear and necessary part of themselves, take refuge, I know, in the plea that the idea of the Chosen People has become altogether spiritualised, that they are now segregated not for an ultimate conquest but for a mission. Their mission is to serve and exalt all mankind. They are just a little vague about the nature of that service. None of the Bible story, they assert, means what it plainly means. But for all that they still propose to remain distinctive and hang together. They want to get together in a land of their own,

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revive their ancient Hebrew learning, and consolidate their drama, literature, learning and so forth, so as to be able to sally forth, refreshed, and with a strengthened mutual understanding, to take control of the intellectual life of the world out of incompetent Gentile hands. The stimulating, organising and purifying activities which have given us the contemporary cinema are also to pervade and dominate the dramatic world, publishing, criticism, the world of art in an ever-intensified degree. It is difficult for a stiff-necked Gentile to respond to those generous intentions with an adequate gratitude.

There is moreover another line of sublimation with a bolder appeal, and that is the line taken by that great neglected genius, David Lubin, the founder of the International Institute of Agriculture in Rome. His Israel was indeed an Israel with a mission, but then he claimed everyone who participated in constructive work as one of the elect. To Lubin I was an honorary Israelite.

"But why then call it Israel?" I protested.

This sort of transfiguration of the objectives of the Chosen People is all very well in apologetic discussion, but there is nothing to sustain it in the normal ceremony and practice and teaching of the cult, which remains a narrow and troublesome nationalism. Let these sublimators repudiate the Bible and the Promise and say what they mean plainly. Then we shall be better able to believe in their assertions of an exalted in-aggressive modernisation.

*Note 12a.* Louis Golding (in *The Jewish Problem*) argues that anti-Judaism is due to the fact that the Jews cried "Crucify him" when Jesus came before Pilate. Jesus, as everybody knows, was crucified (a particularly Roman method of execution) not by the Jews but by the Roman Pontius Pilate. Countless people who criticise the Jews to-day are extremely impartial about the Crucifixion, and I find it difficult to believe that Mr. Golding, who, I presume, is himself a product of orthodox Jewish education, is so entirely unaware of the effect of this Chosen People cult upon the outside world as he seems to be. He ignores it absolutely.

Browne also, refusing to face that primary issue, accounts for the unpopularity of the Jewish community in an entirely different manner. He theorises brilliantly about Jews being urban while non-Jews are rustic. Certainly the Semitic-speakers were prevalently urban in the first century B.C. The balance, says he, must be corrected and all will be well. So the Jew, he decides (1935) had better go to Palestine and dig himself out of his troubles. Both writers then launch out into an account of the great intellectual superiority of Jews to Gentiles, wholesome rather than ingratiating reading for a puffed up Gentile, and cite a string of names, Sigmund Freud, for instance, and Einstein and so on, who are as a matter of fact no more orthodox Jews than I am. They are citizens of the world, they work for all mankind. Even now Freud is busy, he tells me, in a patient analysis of the legend of Moses. Moses, he concludes, was an Egyptian! His monotheism was Akhnaton's sun-worship. (*Moses and Monotheism*.)

Both Golding and Browne are typical of a vast literature on the Jewish question. There is no need to multiply instances. Neither, I think, realises quite clearly what it is that encompasses them, because they are them-

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selves enveloped in it. They accept this taught and cultivated idea system, this ex-religious bias, this artificial solidarity I am arraigning, as though it was in the nature of things and could not be prevented, and thence they wander off into a limitless jungle of controversial irrelevancies, of the rights and wrongs of ancient hates, misunderstandings, persecutions and reprisals, to which there can be no conclusion.

But the eloquent and emotional Mr. Josef Kastein, who dedicates his *History and Destiny of the Jews* quite incongruously to the entirely unorthodox Einstein, concludes his *Jews in Germany* with the real irreconcilable note:

"... we were once in Egypt. Already we have compelled a Pharaoh to set us free. We have outlasted the Pyramids. We shall outlast the denials of all those who surround us."

As a matter of fact the Pyramids were there a long time before the Jews.

I reiterate that the whole scheme and purport of this book is to insist upon the supreme decisive importance of what in § 4 I have called the mental superstructure of the human animal. The reconstruction of its idea system is its only practicable method of adaptation, and here is an idea system that resists and evades reconstruction very obstinately. In §§ 8 and 9 I have assembled and summarised the nature of the great intellectual effort which is needed if our species is to adjust itself to the terrific new conditions that have risen about it. The Jewish conflict disregards this, cuts athwart it, arrests and prevents it, like a noisy quarrel in a laboratory. All the countervailing evil in the world cannot make a bad tradition a good one. Killing or ill-treating a man does not put him in the wrong, but also, we have to remember, and that is not so easy for the liberal-minded, it does not put him in the right. The idea of the solidarity of the Chosen People, evade it or not, remains the fundamental Jewish idea, and this fundamental Jewish idea like any other nationalism, is an offence against the unity of mankind.

*Note 12c.* Persecution mania is a well-known form of insanity. With certain variations of phrase and form, due to the current ideas of the period, it presents an almost stereotyped pattern through the ages. Formerly it was usually witches and warlocks who were supposed to be at the root of the matter. Anyone odd, anyone different, came under suspicion, old crones and afflicted and odd-looking men were distrusted, and very often the suspects caught a touch of the infection and tried doing the things they learnt were so potent. Multitudes of sorcerers have confessed, under no great duress, to impossible crimes. They brewed potions, stuck pins in wax images, cast spells, sent familiar spirits to gibber and creep and whisper in the night.

Madness like everything else moves with the times; it clothes itself in new fashions while remaining essentially the same. Nowadays the witches have become "Occult Powers". They use hypnotism, electricity, infections (Pah!), they radio voices making threats and evil suggestions. Every prominent publicist continually gets letters from sufferers with this type of obsession. Such delusions may easily make the patient a danger to himself and others, and then he is "certified" and taken care of. But in times of social movement and stress this disorder may become conta-

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gious, witness the witch mania of the early seventeenth century. It is then more difficult to deal with. Like a dark shadow to the rational objections that can be made to the in-and-out double nationalism of the Jews, there is a sustained campaign of sinister suggestion with a considerable literature of its own.

Some years ago four or five books written by Mrs. Nesta Webster attracted considerable attention. She is a very competent writer and so sound a Christian, of a faith so uncritical, that she is quite unable to understand that many honest people find a vast amount of Christian doctrine impossible. How impossible, I have sought to show in §§ 13 and 14. To her there is nothing good except in Christianity, and this is so obvious to her that any objection to the faith seems necessarily part of some diabolically hatched conspiracy. She has set herself with the greatest industry to trace and link together the long-drawn succession of Cabalists, Gnostics, Manichæans, the Old Man of the Mountains, Knight Templars, Satanists, Rosicrucians, Illuminati, Freemasons, Rousseau, Voltaire, Cagliostro, Madame Blavatsky, Mrs. Besant, Trade Unions, Anarchists, Socialists, Theosophists, Communists, Those Bolsheviks, a frightful horde all plotting and getting hold of power and handing it on and doing down Christianity and the Christian life. Her books are written with conviction enough to make one look under the bed at nights. She has never quite committed herself to those famous forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* which were published as the articles of association so to speak of that world conspiracy, but she stoutly maintains that though that book may not be genuine, it nevertheless shows the sort of thing of which the Jews are capable. Her book *Secret Societies and Subversive Movements* concludes: "For behind the concrete forces of revolution—whether Pan-German, Judaic or Illuminist—beyond that invisible secret circle which perhaps directs them all, is there not yet another force, still more potent, that must be taken into account? In looking back over the centuries at the dark episodes that have marked the history of the human race from its earliest origins—strange and horrible cults, waves of witchcraft, blasphemies and desecrations—how is it possible to ignore the existence of an occult Power at work in the world? Individuals, sects, or races fired with the desire of world domination, have provided the fighting forces of destruction, but behind them are the veritable powers of darkness in eternal conflict with the powers of light."

I should describe Mrs. Nesta Webster as a perfectly sane and capable person with insane ideas, so widely do I disagree with her. I believe her influence has spread far beyond the circle of her actual readers. Milder forms of the same intellectual malaise at any rate are now very prevalent throughout the more prosperous classes in Great Britain and America. It is the only way to account for the behaviour of Mr. Neville Chamberlain, for example, or old Lord Rothermere, the British newspaper proprietor, towards the Jews, towards Russia, during the past decade. Mr. William Teeling again, to whom I refer in § 13, is another case. A tepid passive Christianity is becoming an aggressive Pro-Christianity under the stresses of the time.

Note 12b. Sir Norman Angell and Mrs. Dorothy Frances Buxton, in a very clear and almost pressingly persuasive book, *You and the Refugees*

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(Penguin Books, 1939), argue for a practically unrestrained admission of these outcasts. They show in particular how beneficial a large refugee immigration might be to the British Empire. It would bring in new trades, new skill, find fresh work for the unemployed, and in Great Britain arrest the approaching decline in population—if that is desirable. Their plea for a more generous treatment of refugees, so far as assimilable individuals are concerned, is unanswerable.

But our authors' arguments for an inassimilable immigration *en bloc* are less convincing. That would only renew the trouble at a later date. There is no time to begin that old history again in new regions and among fresh difficulties. Disaster is advancing too rapidly upon our entire species. Jewish nationalism like every other nationalism must end and end soon. And even though the plea of existing unemployment is an irrational social barrier to assimilable immigrants, it is, in a country where the sense of social insecurity is growing, where confidence in the intelligence and good faith of the government is diminishing, and where large masses of the population, and especially the accumulation of untrained and unemployed young men, see no clear prospect of a tolerable life ahead, none the less a barrier. Implicitly the British authorities admit: "We do not know how to handle our own people, we are getting more and more bothered—by *everything*—and if these people come into our muddle there is bound to be serious trouble". And so in effect they give them up to destruction, not outrageously and openly as the Germans do, but by looking in the opposite direction, and delaying action.

In a scientifically organised, forward-looking social order, there will be no people unemployed and there will be no difficulty whatever in the movement of population from point to point. The whole world will be everyman's and the fullness thereof. The bare possibility of such a rational order sustains whatever hope there is for mankind in this present survey of the human outlook. But this world we are living in is not a rational world and the harsh reality we have to face when we cast the Jewish horoscope is this closing-up of the avenues of escape.

Already in the past year or so, a multitude, scores and possibly hundreds of thousands, must have been done to death. And still it goes on. . . .

In *You and the Refugee*, however, I came upon one passage that affected me very disagreeably and I think I ought to say a word about it here. It is too germane to this discussion to omit:

"Not all Jews are Zionists, but all Jews will resent the letting down of Zionists, the surrender of Zionists to Arab terrorism. And their resentment will be world-wide. We do not perhaps realise the possible repercussions.

"For nearly a century the relations of Great Britain and the United States were bedevilled and rendered difficult by the attitude which the Irish element in America took towards any move of Anglo-American rapprochement. Again and again the influence of the Irish vote, of Irish politicians, Irish newspaper owners, blocked opportunities of Anglo-American co-operation. Englishmen have never disguised the political importance for the Empire, for world peace, for the future of Anglo-Saxon civilisation, of a close co-operation of the two great English-speaking peoples. Are the obstacles thereto that Irish mistrust and hatred erected

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to be followed by Jewish mistrust and hatred? The Jews have not less influence in the United States to-day than the Irish have had yesterday. . . .

"The power of world Jewry is moral—the power of journalists, writers, dramatists, scientists. It is worth while for an Empire as gravely menaced as the British to have that power on its side." . . . That is a threat and a very evil and embittering threat. Happily it is not made by Jews but by two over-officious Gentile champions on their behalf. I do not see things from the Imperialist stand-point of these authors. I think the British Empire has outlived its usefulness. But the consolidation of the English-speaking people as the vehicle of a world civilisation is quite another matter, and a matter of great urgency. Yet unless the British government does what it is told in Palestine, the Chosen People, we are told, will devote themselves to preventing that consolidation. They will do all the mischief they can to the growing Gentile understanding. The unification of the world, it seems, will prove a small matter in face of the offended God of Israel. The wrongs and the revenge of Israel are to take precedence. Israel, the immortal and the unforgetting, will sit triumphant among the ruins, still muttering "We have outlasted the Pyramids". I think that is a very unhappy suggestion indeed. It does no justice to the intellectual quality of Israel. I doubt if any representative Jewish writer could be quoted in support of it. But it is exactly what the Jews are accused of doing by their worst enemies. My first reaction to it, until I realised that this dream of vindictive sabotage was a purely Gentile invention, was acute resentment and anger. I believe these two authors would be wise to take that tactless and unjustifiable passage out of any further editions of their well-intentioned book.

Note 13A. "We Catholics acknowledge readily, without any shame, nay with pride, that Catholicism cannot be identified simply and wholly with primitive Christianity, nor even with the Gospel of Christ, in the same way that the great oak cannot be identified with the tiny acorn. There is no mechanical identity, but an organic identity. And we go further and say that thousands of years hence Catholicism will probably be even richer, more luxuriant, more manifold in dogma, morals, law and worship, than the Catholicism of the present day. A religious historian of the fifth millennium A.D. will without difficulty discover in Catholicism conceptions and forms and practices which derive from India, China and Japan, and he will have to recognise a far more obvious 'complex of opposites'. It is quite true. Catholicism is a union of contraries. But 'contraries are not contradictories'. . . . The Gospel of Christ would have been no living gospel, and the seed which He scattered no living seed, if it had remained ever the tiny seed of A.D. 33, and not struck root, and had not assimilated foreign matter, and had not by the help of this foreign matter grown up into a tree, so that the birds of the air dwell in its branches." Professor Karl Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism* (1938).

For reasons I have made perfectly clear in this book, I do not believe there will be any Roman Catholic Church at all in the fifth millennium A.D., but (but see § 18) it is amusing to speculate how the successors of Professor Karl Adam, long before then, would have plaited into the Trinity that God of Male Sex Appeal from whose left eye sprang the Sun.

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Goddess, while he blew Susa-no-o, the dragon-slaying Susa-no-o, from his nose. It is, I agree, not at all improbable, given the survival and continual growth of the Church.

Morgan Young, in the book I have cited in the text, tells that the great assimilation prophesied by Professor Karl Adam has already begun. The crude early Christians, still in the "acorn" phase, preferred martyrdom to burning a pinch of incense to the Roman God-Emperors, but the more catholic-spirited Church of to-day has already established friendly relations with the Shinto faith, Japan and Rome have exchanged envoys, and the Japanese Catholic bows in the Shinto temples in acquiescence to the local supremacy of the Emperor-Divinity over the Vatican.

Note 23A. Sir Arthur's Epilogue begins: "Shall we never pluck the best from fate and find the Golden Mean? Must we ever choose freedom without order, or order without freedom? Must justice and mercy bring always weakness in their train, and strength bring tyranny?"

"Shall peace be never made between equals, but imposed always by victor upon vanquished? Must every Peace Treaty sow the seeds of future war? Shall the strong never be magnanimous and the weak never secure justice? Must success always sap the will, and the humiliation of defeat incite only to revenge? Shall wars with changing victors be for ever the dire fate of men?"

"We, the free democracies of the world, have the virtues bred and nursed in the pursuits of peace. That is not enough. We need also the sterner virtues—fortitude, daemonic energy, the will to act—and to act together." (p. 385.)

"...willing co-operation and the endurance which is only possible to an instructed people who understand the purpose of their effort and approve it" (p. 384). Sir Arthur Salter, *Security. Can we retrieve it?* (1939).

Note 31A. A friendly adviser reading the foregoing comments on Marx protests against "the wombs of associated labour" as a mistranslation of the original German of the *Manifesto*. I took it from the translation of Professor Hirendranath Mukherjee in an Indian students' journal, *Sriharsha*, which happened to be on my desk. But my adviser produces Lily G. Aitken and Frank C. Budgen in a Glasgow Socialist Labour Press publication, who give it as "the lap of social labour", which is more refined but pure nonsense. The German word is "schoss", and in its widest sense it means the whole productive maternal outfit from bosom to knees and here quite definitely the womb. The French translation gives "sein", which at the first glance seems to carry gentility to an even higher level. But as you can say in French that an expectant mother carries her child in her "sein", I think Professor Mukherjee has it. Thousands of reverent young Communists must have read that "lap" without observing its absurdity. Marx is trying to make out that the increase of productive efficiency was due to "association" in factories. A better phrase to express his (wrong-headed) intention would have been "the co-ordinated operations of workers massed in factories".





